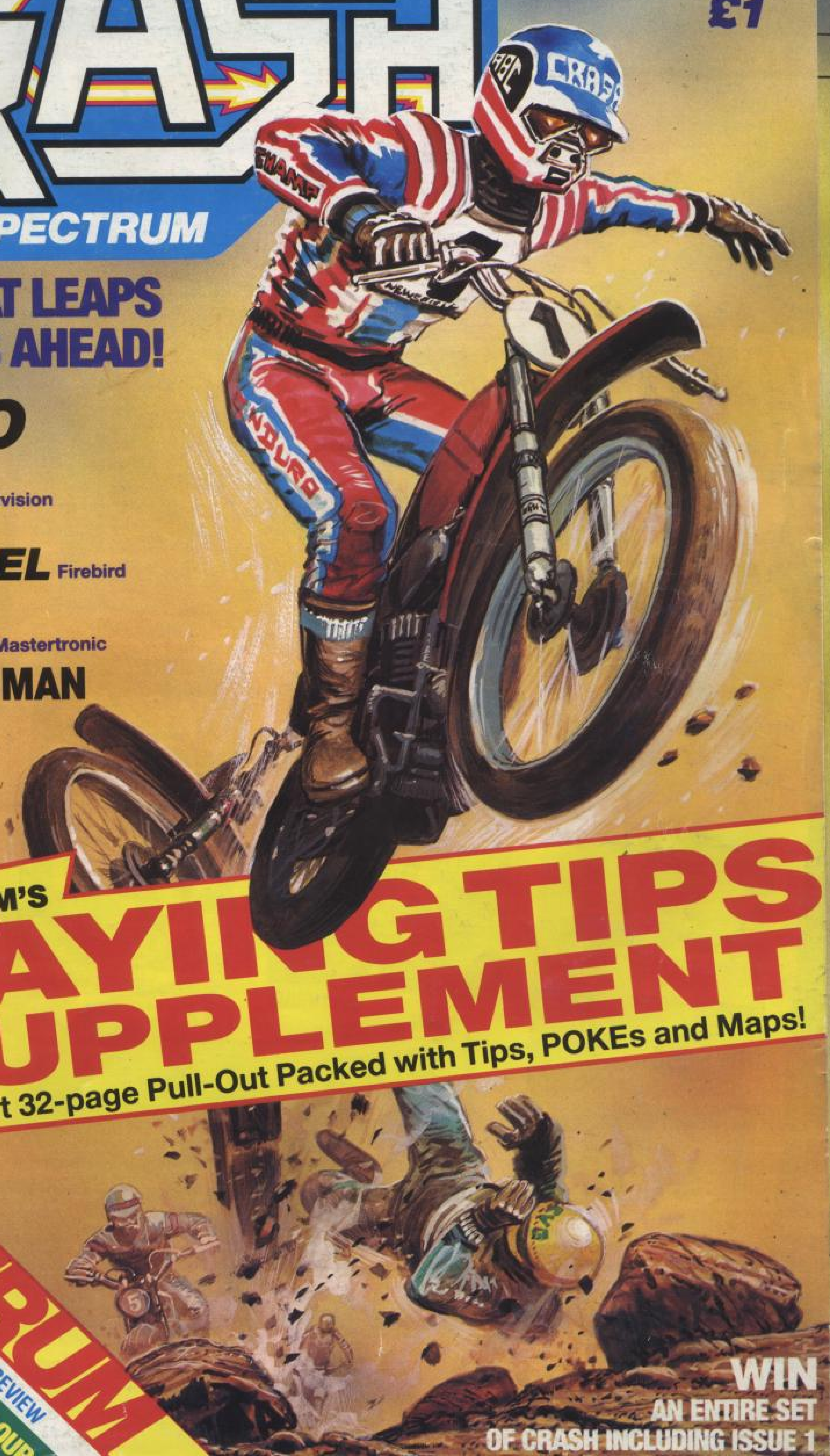
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CRASH
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CRASH

ZX SPECTRUM

ISSUE No. 40 MAY 1987

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FEATURES



REGULARS





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MORE NEW FACES

Having announced that I was returning to the editor's chair in last month's issue, and that Richard Eddy had moved over to CRASH from AMTIX! to help with reviews, there are still further new faces to introduce this month.

Who are the two dashing, debonaire blades in the picture, you may well ask? Along with Lloyd Mangram, they have the distinction of being a touch more mature than most on the CRASH reviewing team. **Ian Phillipson** *lives in Ledbury, a town in Herefordshire almost as beautiful as sleepy Ludlow (he disagrees, considering it to be the other way round). Ian's fairly new to computer gaming, and was pressganged from his happy life as a freelance journalist because it was assumed that if he had survived life this long by selling words, he must* be able to write. He's a rural man but fair, and decided to give joystick bashing a go – it makes a change (of sorts) from wielding bat and ball for Herefordshire County Cricket team.

Ian's main function on CRASH is to write the 'introductory' parts of game reviews – you know, the bits that start with a large capital letter to tell you where to start reading.

The other one in the picture, looking a bit like he could be violent any second (probably because he forgot to take his slippers off before coming in to work), is the CRASH Sub-Editor, **Ciarán Brennan**. As you can tell, he's Irish, and hails from fair Dublin. A sub's job is to make sure everything is proof-read and appears in correct English (don't ask what an Irishman knows about English, as Ciarán is likely to reply with the fact that the Irish are the most literate and educated populace in the EEC).

► **CRASH newcomers Ian Phillipson (left) and Ciarán Brennan.**



Ciarán rewrites anything that needs it and is otherwise gainfully employed bashing reviewers around the head to make sure they actually do the writing in the first place, so he's got something to correct. Ciarán's hobbies include drinking ('just the occasional drop') and rubbing his shoe heels on the office nylon carpet and then delivering mighty static shocks to recalcitrant reviewers. If you're interested, the funny little accent over the A in his first name is called a 'fodder' (or something like that), and 'broadens' the letter to make it sound like an O .

► **Local from Ludlow – Gareth Adams, a new reviewer for the CRASH team.**



Another Ludlovian joins the team this month. **Gareth Adams** has been a CRASH reader since Issue One, and a Spectrum owner for longer. His attachment to CRASH up until now has largely been through serving alcoholic refreshment to team members in the Bull Inn, around the corner from CRASH Towers, but recently he decided the money was easier here. Aged 19, he's studying for a Diploma in Electronics and Com- ►

BACKNUMBERS

No 36: Xmas 1986/1987
*Another dose of traditionally festive fun, this year accompanied by Issue 0 of **LM** and containing a peek behind the scenes in Grovel Hill, where they make the magazine that bears Lloyd's initials. Lloyd himself looks back over 1986 giving a resume of the games we all played. Mel Croucher begins the saga of TAMARA KNIGHT: Part One of the tale of a fast-food salesbeing of the future is accompanied by Part Two. Simon Goodwin finds that it isn't just Spectrum owners who are playing Spectrum games . . . Apart from the usual regular features, we talked to the DENTON DESIGNERS and found out about the split, reviewed Kat Trap, the GENESIS game and looked at musical add-ons. Not forgetting the definitive CRASH Index for 1986 and the NEWSFIELD Reviewers' Challenge . . .*



Maps included *Infiltrator*, Level One of *Scooby Doo*, all of *Heartland*, *The Great Escape*, and *Druid*.

No 37: February 1987
The man behind JETMAN is interviewed and reveals a few of his dark secrets, and we reveal the dark secrets of the trio of reviewers chained up in the CRASH Dungeon. TAMARA KNIGHT continues her adventures, as does Franco Frey in the world of Video Digitisers. The full match report on the Match Day Challenge is given, in which we tell how one of the programmers responsible for the classic game ended up 'sick as a parrot'. Games mapped in February included part of *Fairlight II*, all of *Firelord*, *Avenger* and *Dandy*.

You might be lucky and win an entire set of CRASH from Issue One onwards in this month's competition on page 142. On the other hand, you might not, and you wouldn't want to miss out on anything, would you?

If there are any issues you're missing, get an order in now, because we're rapidly running out of some earlier issues. Use the form below, and send it off to Aggie as quick as you can!

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munications Engineering. Favourite game is still *Elite*, unless you count Rugby, which he says he likes because it allows him to release the pent up aggressions of an afternoon spent avoiding mighty static shocks an being told to rewrite things. Gareth's name will be now appearing at the top of several review columns along with those of Paul Sumner, Mike (Skippy) Dunn, Ben Stone and Richard (Ricky – the full name was too long!) Eddy.

NEW REVIEW LAYOUT

You will also notice that the layout of CRASH reviews has changed slightly. There are now, in effect, three types; Smashes, games of 50 percent and above and games below 50 percent. The change is more one of length than style really. We're making them all a bit snappier so we can fit more in (in those months when there are a lot), and allow more room for the increased number of colour screen shots.

An omission from the Regulars list is Lloyd Mangram's Hall of Slime. It hasn't died – it's just taking a holiday while Lloyd does a spot of rethinking about how it should be presented in the future. So watch out next month for – well, something a bit different!

Roger Kean

GAMES REVIEW INDEX

ADVERTISERS INDEX

IN NEXT MONTH'S CRASH

WIN
The last of our **Ferguson MC05 Monitors, with Interface and Spectrum +2** *** And there's a day out at **The London Dungeon** with the gorgeous **Jo Meads from Melbourne House** (and the very lovely Richard Eddy) to be won in a *Throne of Fire* competition.

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Derek Brewster's getting his act together for a very special adventure bonanza. Don't miss it!

MIKE SINGLETON SPEAKS!
He does? Yes, in next month's CRASH; a veritable gossip column on *Throne of Fire*, and he reveals the **TRUTH behind *Eye of the Moon*!**

PBM Mailbox is expanding too – it's getting a sorting office of its own next month, as Brendan Kavanagh demands more space!

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VIDEO ACTIVE

Budget Software house, **MASTERTRONIC**, are about to launch two new labels, but they've nothing to do with computers. **Master Vision** and **Master Sound** will produce videos and audio cassettes and LPs respectively. Some of the more notable videos scheduled for release are *Felix the Cat*, *Creepshow* and *Rock, Rock, Rock*. The only cassette CRASH has heard so far is *Heat Of Soul*, a compilation of classic soul tunes – most of them cropping up in Levi commercials these days. The vids are hoped to retail around the eight pounds mark and the LPs at roughly a fiver.



SUMMER CETI

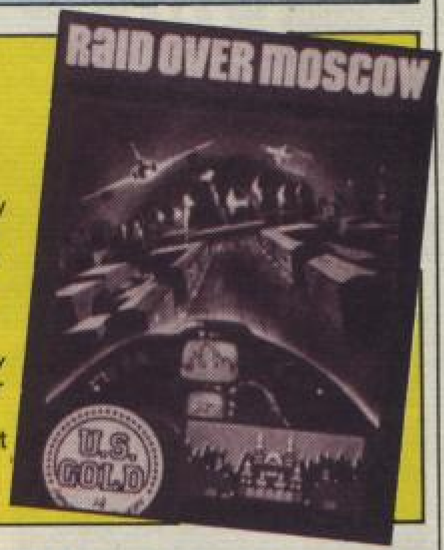
The elaborate *Tau Ceti* system is once more a backdrop for a an arcade shoot 'em up from **CRL**. *Traxxion*, written by **Jay Darret**, centres around a construction satellite orbiting Reema. However, after the Tau Ceti wars Traxxion was found to be damaged – and as an intergalactic satellite repairman, your skills are called upon.

Arriving on Traxxion reveals a far more serious problem, the reactor has started to meltdown. You have to act quickly and locate the exit from Traxxion's monorail system before the inevitable destruction.

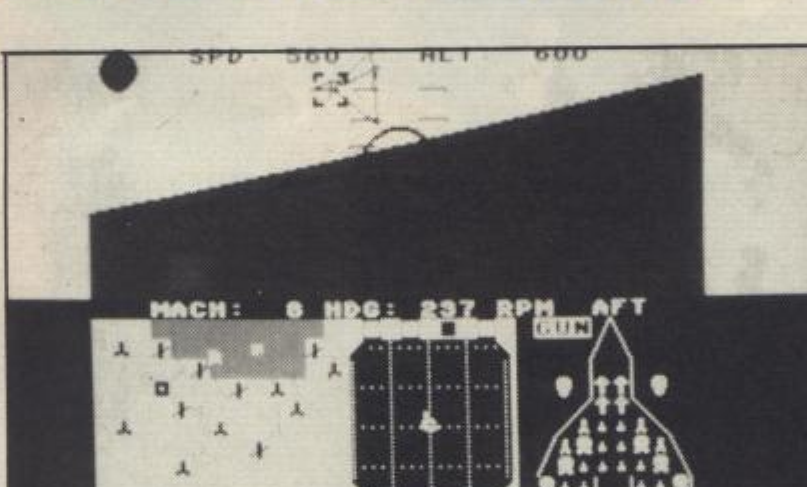
As you may well imagine, the monorail is plagued with hazards such as robotic workers and obstacles that make escape just that little bit more difficult. **CRL** are hoping for a June release at a yet to be decided price.

RAID IN MOSCOW

Although the computer industry isn't exactly huge behind the Iron Curtain, pirates are running amok producing compilations of Western games and flogging them off at the equivalent of £5. Even stranger is that *Raid Over Moscow* and the Anti-soviet *Rambo* appear to be very popular! Whatever next . . . will little green men want copies of *Invaders*?



LATE EXPECTATIONS



High up, an enemy aircraft comes within killing reach in F-15 Strike Eagle.

Due to the Easter Holidays, this issue of CRASH had to be finished a bit earlier than usual, which meant that some review copies of games arrived a wee bit late for a the full treatment. However, as we never like to let you lot down here's a small taster . . .

Next month we'll bring the full review of *Cosmic Shock Absorber* from MARTECH. It's finished now, but arrived just too late for a full review. Essentially, it's a 3D shoot 'em up using some effective vector graphics combined with a bit of puzzle-solving. Strange rumours also abound about killer carrots . . .



VIRGIN are releasing their latest *Now Games* compilation – *Now 4*. It features *Dan Dare, Hacker, Back to the Future, Mission Omega* and *Jonah Barrington's Squash*. Retailing at £9.95, it's good value for money with *Dan Dare* and *Mission Omega* really taking the cream.

From **MICRO PROSE**, who have recently been let off the **US GOLD** leash, comes *Gunship*, a strategic helicopter simulation and *F-15 Strike Eagle* an air combat game. Full reviews next issue.

The view from the Gunship cockpit.



ALL THE FUN OF THE FAIR

No sooner does one ZX Microfair seem to end then another one is well on its way. The next gathering is to held on May 30th at the Horticultural Hall in London. CRASH won't be there this time, mainly due the fact that we have to spend our time doing something called 'writing a magazine.' For Microfair details, give Mike Jonston a ring on 01 801 9172.

DI's F16

While MICROPROSE are happily battling away with their F15 flight game, DIGITAL INTEGRATION are currently developing a new simulation based on the *F16 Fighter Falcon*. They've been working on some new programming techniques which enable them to increase the density and variety of objects on screen. Missions are planned to include air superiority as well as ground attack sequences. The expected release date is early Autumn, and as ever we'll bring you a full preview as soon as possible.

ACTIVISION CLASSICS

Remember the old days, when ACTIVISION released such classics as *Back To The Future*, *I Of The Mask* and *Pitfalls One and Two*? Well, cue music, cue sound . . . because FIREBIRD SILVER have bought the rights to ACTIVISION's back catalogue of games and are planning to release nearly forty of them the next 12 months. The oldies are going to start sparkling early in the summer.

CHEAPIES

PRISM LEISURE have just bought up ADDICTIVE GAMES – the company that pushed **Kevin Tom**'s face into the limelight, and produced the infinitely popular *Football Manager*. PRISM are re-releasing that particular classic at £2.99, although from the amount PRISM are crowing about its immense sales figures we can't help wondering – is there anyone out there who hasn't already got a copy?

Also about to be released on BUBBLE BUS' Mini Bus Line at £1.99 is a previous CRASH Smash, *Wizard's Lair*. It's a arcade adventure featuring delightful graphics, and is still recommended by the CRASH team. Finally PSS' *Swords and Sorcery* is now on release for a very reasonable £2.99.

KEEPING IT STIFF

The next release from PALACE is to be a game worked upon by two of today's most respected programming teams – BINARY VISION and ELECTRONIC PENCIL COMPANY. It's called *Stifflip and Co* and follows the fortunes of Sebastion Stifflip and his three intrepid companions in their tropical quest for Count Chameleon. The plot and following action is a spoof on the ripping yarns of the 20's and 30's using many of the cliches of the comics and movies of the era.

BINARY VISION describe Stifflip as a 'multi-role action packed adventure.' Preview next ish hopefully, in the meantime we'll leave you to ogle this screenshot.



Fear & Loathing

THE SPY WHO CAME IN FOR A DRINK

Tired out after a long squawk, Minson turns to the world of international espionage to eke out a crust. As usual the intrepid ligger finds a world occupied by leggy blondes and Gin Martinis.



I did it in despair! After last time, when I thought I'd never ever see another launch, I sold my soul to MI5. So here they are . . . the continuing adventures of Minson – Super Spy.

It started with a brick which crashed through the window, bounced gently off the back of my bonce and fell to the floor. Apparently this is a new Post Office service for the delivery of top secret messages. As I read the words 'Odeon Leicester Square – 11am Sunday,' a chill ran down my spine. I knew that there was no way that I could miss out on this vital rendezvous, and yet there was something wrong . . . I don't get up on Sundays 'til at least midday!

Still, I managed to drag myself from under my duvet for a special preview of *The Fourth Protocol*, courtesy of ARIOLASOFT who are now handling this tale of spies and skullduggery. A few skulls get dugged in the movie, as well as a back getting snapped and a throat getting slit . . . ideal Sunday morning entertainment! Play the game, watch the movie and get paranoid about bombs in your backyard!

Then there was the liaison with the mysterious woman. Why was her once blonde hair now darker? Could it be that she was hiding from somebody? If so, she couldn't have picked a better place than the MASTERTRONIC offices. Titchy little computer cassettes are one thing, but now the company has gone in for great big video boxes and stacks of 12" records, the place begins to resemble a maze.

Luckily the late lamented MASTERTRONIC Mata Hari, **Alison Beasley** (for it was she) spirited me away to an exotic basement where I tucked into a steak, she tackled an oversize cheese salad, and we disposed of a couple of bottles of wine.

Over the meal she easily persuaded me that *Mastersound* and *Mastervision* will do for your ears and eyes what good old M-tronic did for your chips. With soul classics on the LP and titles like *Creepshow* and *The Exterminator* on the VHS, I'm convinced.

'But what about the new arcade machines you're producing? Where will they go?', I asked. Alison turned pale. 'And MELBOURNE HOUSE are moving in, aren't they?' Listen, if you've got a room to let, I reckon MASTERTRONIC has a corresponding space problem!

More mystery as a foreign power, whose Ambassador is a certain **Mr Wright**, suggested I should go to church. By now I was getting used to meetings in unlikely locations, and if this mysterious blond wanted to slip me something between the pews, he was in for a big surprise.

But the church turned out to be London's chic Limelight Club and it's now well and truly deconsecrated. Boy, ACTIVISION had invited the world and his uncle to this extravaganza, thrown specially to celebrate Flat-top's return to the world of PR and, more likely, his escape from that human waste disposal unit, Gobbler Liddon.



► Gobbler Liddon and Wonderboy Wright, the late lamented Thalamus team

Lots of good stuff to vid, such as *Star Raiders II*, *Enduro Racer* and the game they named after Andy himself, *Wonderboy*. A well stocked bar too, but it was a pity the speeches interrupted the meal – it was a race to see whether the audience or the food would cool off first as the hard sell dragged on.

A lavish do indeed, in a setting that makes The Rocky Horror Picture Show look subtle. Would you believe silver candleabra with black and white candles? And when we emerged from the nosh there was a line of coin ops set to free play, making this the world's trendiest arcade.

Still, even I can only take so much excitement, which is why it was something of a relief to be contacted by my superiors and asked to investigate some odd goings on near Abingdon. Could it really be that they suspected HEWSON of being in league with the enemy?

It didn't take long to discover that the company has indeed got involved with something strange. It goes by the name of **Christian Urquhart**, a trainee human being who could give Liddon a run for his money in the Gross Out Olympics. Christian is a damn good programmer though, and *Gunrunner*, his first project for HEWSON promises to be a mega-blaster shoot-em-up!

'Of course I'll still have to file my report with M', I told **Andrew Hewson**. A sly look came over his face . . . 'At least let us take you out to lunch first.' 'Are you trying to bribe me?' I asked, but it was too late – **Julia** and **Debbie** were bundling me into the company car.

We drove at a reckless pace along deserted country lanes. Would I ever see Miss Spendapenny again? Did I want to when I was at the mercy of these delightful damsels? By the time they'd finished feeding my face with pheasant, I'd forgotten everything they taught me at spy school. The best form of brainwashing is always a good meal.

'There's more where that came from next month', they promised. By now I felt like a double agent – as in seeing double! It was almost by accident that I stumbled into the seedy Soho cellar that sometimes serves as a film preview theatre, only to find myself part of BEYOND's *Star Trek IV* celebration – a brave attempt to convince the hacks that the game will appear one day.

The film itself is odd, to say the least. Kirk and the reborn Spock take a day trip back to 1987 in a Klingon ship to save the Whales! I bet BEYOND wishes they had similar time-travelling abilities, so they could capture a copy of the program. Okay, so they had the ST version there, but what about one for a computer like a Spectrum, that real people can afford?

I did notice the two 'love-berks' (sic) of another magazine billing and cooing, and all but throwing the furniture at each other. Seems he loved the movie, she merely laughed at it. Somebody should tell their poor, gullible readers about them. It looked like there was going to be more action in the audience than on-screen, when I noticed a tall Scandinavian. Could this be my secret contact?

Actually it turned out to be none other than **Bo Jangeborg** of *Fairlight* and *Artist* fame. But what was he doing at a TELECOMSOFT bash. Seems he's had enough of life on THE EDGE and has found somewhere new to rest his power supply. He told me a whole lot more, but as it was all in Swedish I didn't understand a word. Maybe I just wasn't cut out for the secrets lark.

I was on the verge of resigning when the phone rang and an unmistakeable titter rang out. 'Hi, John', said the titterer, 'I bet you thought the spying lark was all fast cars and beautiful birds, didn't you? Well, it is for some of us.'

'You can't fool me, **Michael Baxter**', I snapped. 'Oh no?' said the elegant one, 'Well, ask me about my date with **Maria Whittaker**.' 'Pull the other one . . . ', I cried. 'I've got photographic evidence', he giggled, happy as a dog with two bones.



► Maria Whittaker – more next month

At that moment another brick crashed through my last unbroken window. A picture was attached to it. I gasped. So Baxter wasn't lying . . . what was the explanation? I'd tell you if it wasn't for the Officious Secrets Act, but as it is, you'll have to wait 'til next month for the facts of Baxtie and the Page Three Bird. Yours in F&L (Shaken and Stirred!)

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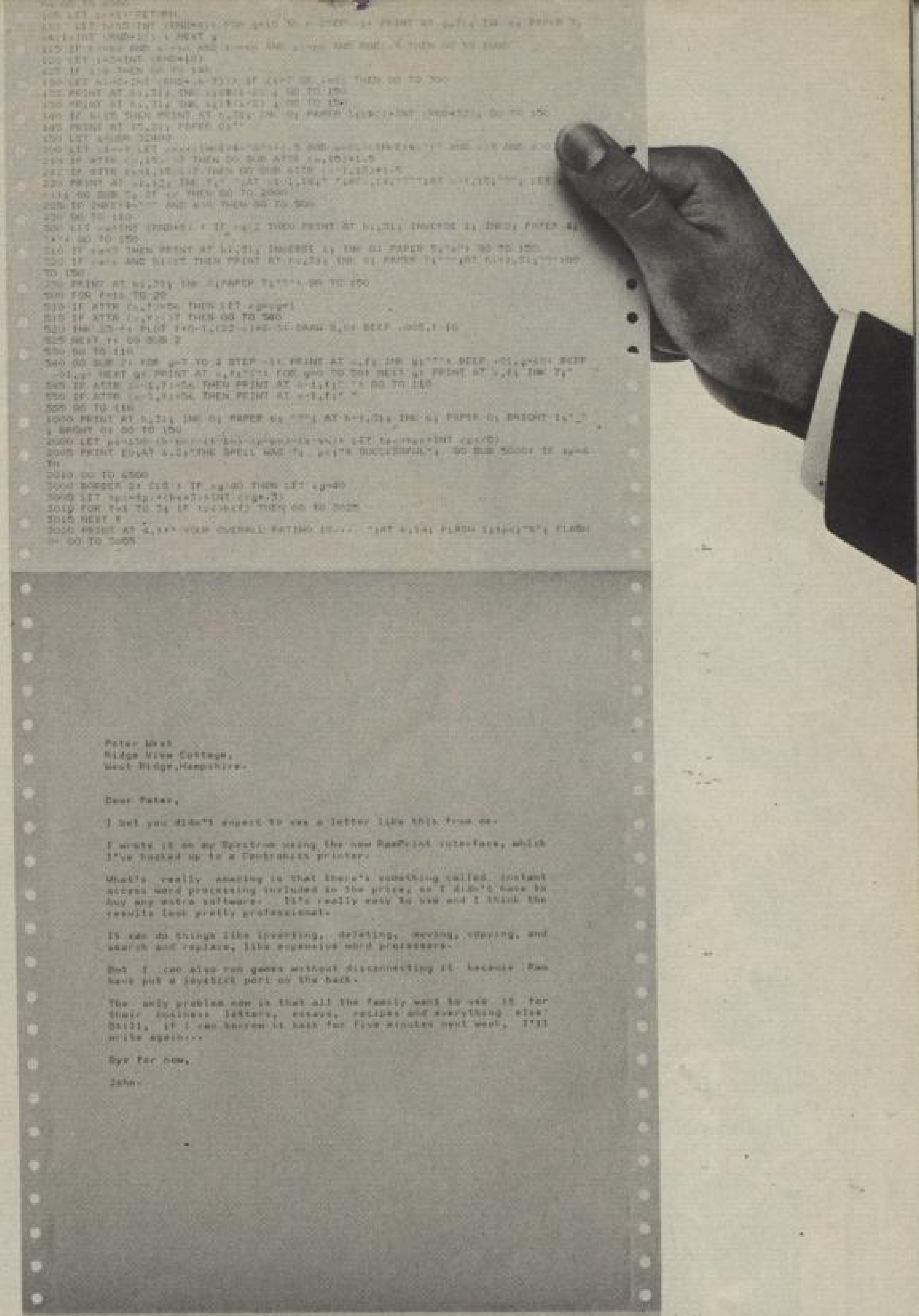
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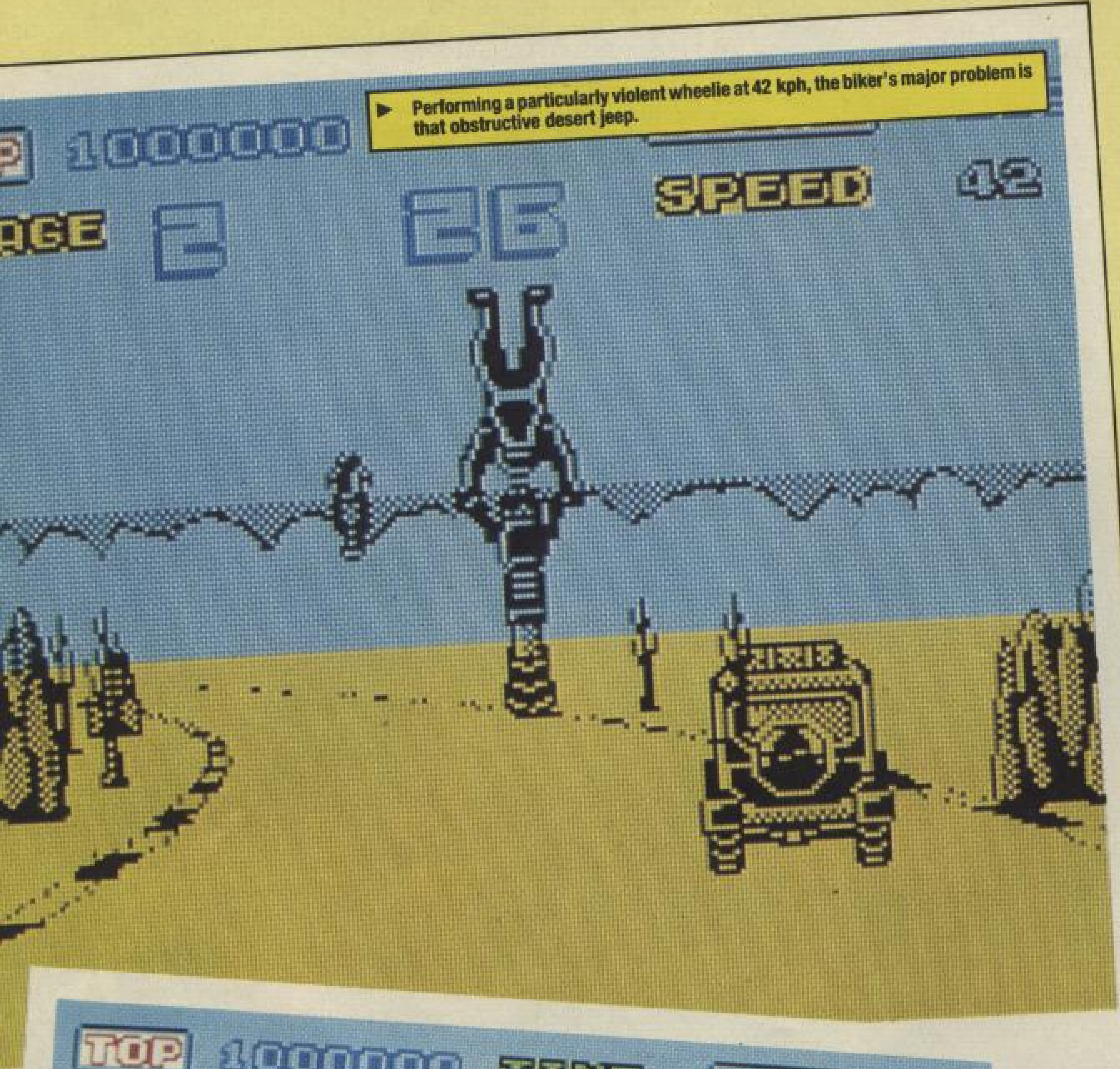



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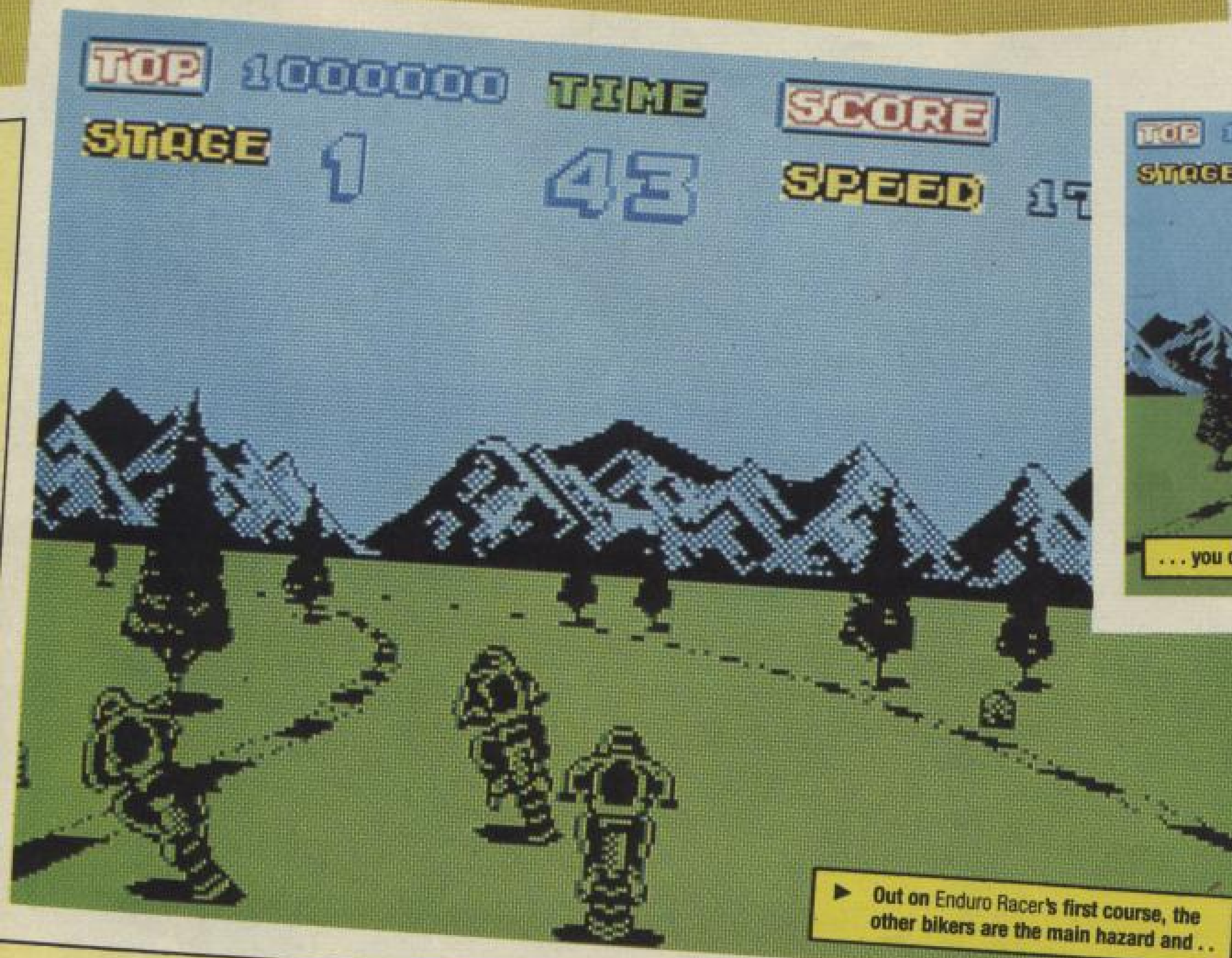
► Performing a particularly violent wheelie at 42 kph, the biker's major problem is that obstructive desert jeep.

Race games never quite seem to lose their thrill, though many in the past have disappointed after raising expectations beyond programming skills. Now, after plenty of rather early magazine coverage, ACTIVISION's licensed version of SEGA's successful coin-op *Enduro Racer* is out for appraisal.

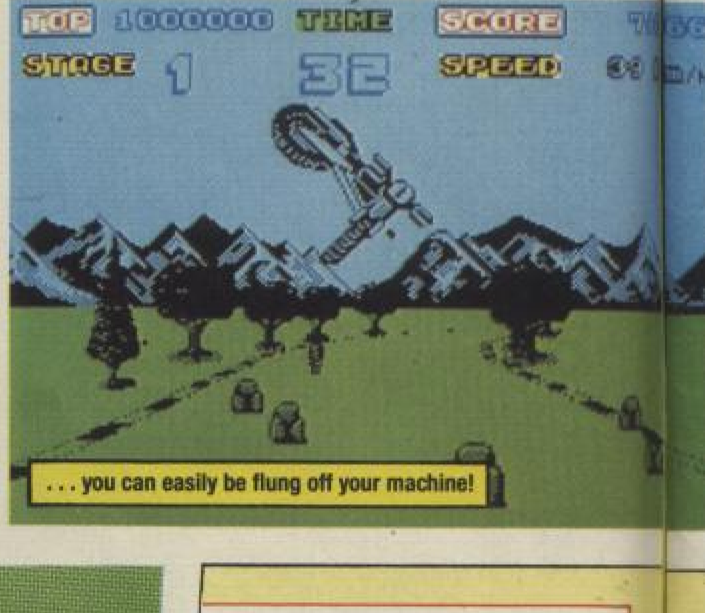
CRITICISM

" Well done ACTIVISION! At last someone's come up with a very realistic arcade conversion – you feel as though you're actually sat on a bike, hurtling along a race track at over a hundred miles an hour. The graphics are amazing, hills, dips, jumps, trees, rocks and stones are all well designed and excellently animated. One little quirk though, I wasn't happy with the annoying tune which plays while you're racing – it gets in the way of the engine's revving sound. The price is a little high, but the realism makes this package well worth the money. "

GARETH



► Out on *Enduro Racer*'s first course, the other bikers are the main hazard and . .



. . . you can easily be flung off your machine!

Producer: Activision
Retail Price: **£9.99**
Author: **Giga Games**

The action involves a series of motorcycle races spread over five courses, each accompanied by its own background landscape. The objective is simple; out-race other riders and successfully complete all the levels in the shortest possible time.

The biker is viewed from behind and slightly above, in vanishing point perspective. He's generally centred in the screen, while the track scrolls sideways as necessary to suggest curves, and the distant landscape follows suit. The horizon also moves up and down, for ACTIVISON have incorporated the original's bumps and hills.

The first course, set in a tree-lined country road, introduces the player to some of the hazards that lie ahead on other tracks. There's only a handful of competitors to contend with, and few jumps, or wheelies, to be executed. Control is straightforward: steer left and right, accelerate, brake and wheelies (used to avoid losing speed on jumps).

At the start of every race a timer is set to 60 seconds, the limit within which the course must be completed – the actual time taken to complete a course is displayed at the end of each circuit. Opponent racers pose a threat in as much as a collision with one flings your bike aside, losing you valuable time as you restart.

The second track, set in a desert, is made even more treacherous by the addition of rock falls, and the presence of a jeep hurtling around the course alongside the bikes. The third circuit tests your skills further by the inclusion of water on either side of the track, and the two final courses are even harder – snow on the fourth, and sea and sand on the fifth.

Sadly, ACTIVISION have decided not to include the arcade original's bike saddle to sit on while playing – you'll just have to borrow a friend's motor cycle, or imagine the sensation!

CRITICISM

" Whoever picked this for an ACTIVISION licence took a great risk, but it's certainly paid off. This is the ultimate race game on the Spectrum so far, I've seen nothing else that compares with its graphic realism or playability. The scenery is well drawn and moves smoothly past you in a most lifelike fashion. What is so astounding about Enduro Racer **is that it's an almost perfect copy of the arcade game (apart from the 10p slot of course). The landscape and playability make ACTIVISION's latest one of the most addictive race games you'll ever see on the Spectrum. "**

PAUL

CRITICISM

" Full Throttle **was undoubtedly my favourite race game, but I must confess,** Enduro Racer **has converted me. It knocks the pants off Spectrum race games. The graphics are superb, the bumps and ridges in the roads are conveyed excellently. My only moan is the 48K sound; it's been used endlessly for Formula 1 racing cars, helicopter rotors and aircraft engines. They all sound the same! Still, the superb front end makes up for this, it's got a good high score/best time table and loads of options.** Enduro Racer **must stand as one of the most successful conversions for a long time, and I think it's a game all road race fans couldn't survive without. Brilliant. "**

MIKE

COMMENTS

Control keys: definable
Joystick: Kempston, Cursor, Interface 2
Use of colour: generally monochromatic, with background colour changed for each course
Graphics: large, beautifully drawn, fast and with very smooth scrolling
Sound: adequate
Skill levels: one, with increasing difficulty on subsequent courses
Screens: five tracks
General rating: A risky Spectrum conversion that has paid off handsomely, providing all the thrills and spills of the original.

Presentation	90%
Graphics	94%
Playability	93%
Addictive qualities	91%
Value for money	86%
Overall	**92%**

TIME FLIGHT

Producer: The Power House
Retail Price: **£1.99**
Author: **Steven John Tatlock**

This multi-directional airborne shoot 'em up is a conversion of a 1981 Atari arcade favourite. Having passed through a time-warp, your ultra modern jet fighter is confronted by a multitude of archaic but belligerent aircraft . . . in the year 1925.

There is a way back to your own time though. The letters W A R and P float about, collecting them to spell the word 'warp' zooms you forward to the next time zone – and eventually to the relative safety of your own era. Collected letters are displayed in a panel at the bottom right of the screen.

To collect these letters it is imperative to avoid the swarms of attacking aircraft – these evolve with each time zone, progressing from bi-planes to helicopters as the years progress. Your advanced superfighter manoeuvres in all directions, and blasts the enemy from the sky with its high-powered cannon. Ten points are awarded for each 'kill', with the total score displayed bottom left. Also at the bottom left, a bonus score counts down from 1,000 – the remaining bonus points are added to the total score on the completion of each time zone.

Choosing one of four skill levels, you start your mission with three lives. One of these is lost on each contact with an enemy aircraft or missile, with another added on entry to a new time zone.

CRITICISM

" This was around ages ago on the BBC (many of my school hours were spent playing it instead of doing Computer Studies!) and it was just as bad then as it is now. The sprite's movement is pathetic, your craft spins around at such a speed that it's possible to kill everything as it comes on screen (useful for high scores). However, problems occur when you attempt to progress through the levels – you simply can't dodge everything. "

BEN

"I'm glad that 1982 only lasted for the usual 365 days – as this is a prime example of the sort of software released that year. I was amazed to see that the programmer is the same person who wrote Agent X *– he must have written this as a joke. The graphics are appalling (especially the collision detection) and the key responses are erratic. The packaging's nice, apart from one dreadful spelling error, but the game's really tacky. "*

PAUL

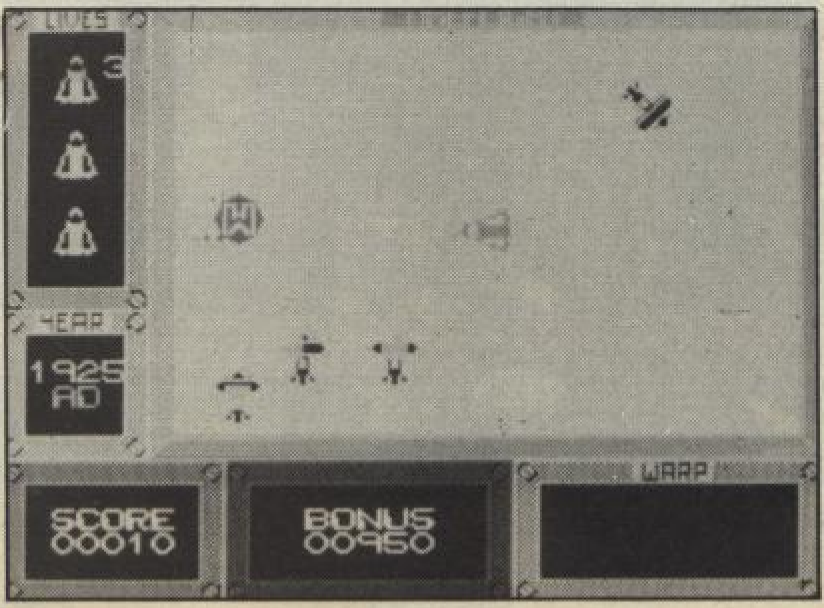
" A conversion from the BBC On our Spectrums? – no thanks! The graphics are absolutely abysmal, with the appalling use of colour making the planes almost invisible on some levels. Even for two pounds, *Time Flight* is a game that everyone's collection can do without. "

MIKE

COMMENTS

Control keys: top three rows – left-hand to rotate left; right-hand to rotate right; bottom row to fire
Joystick: Kempston, Interface 2
Use of colour: plenty of variety, but appalling clashes
Graphics: minimal and undetailed
Sound: basic spot effects
Skill levels: four
General rating: Unimpressive clone of a dated arcade machine.

Presentation	57%
Graphics	33%
Playability	28%
Addictive qualities	24%
Value for money	37%
Overall	**29%**



SCEPTRE OF BAGDAD

Producer: Atlantis
Retail Price: **£1.99**
Author: **Productive Playtime**

A chubby Caliph in the Middle East is having a spot of bother. On the first day of each year he must produce the 'Sceptre of Bagdad' to show his people that he is fit to govern their land. However, on one such occasion the Caliph has woken early, feeling decidedly strange. After a quick bodily perusal he discovers that he has shrunk to tiny proportions. Desperately he climbs from his bed, and clambers up to the Magic Lamp that sits upon his dressing table.

Vigorously rubbing it, he awakens and consults his Magic Genie. In answer to his questions, the ever helpful phantom tells him that he is the victim of a spell, cast by a wicked wizard. The Caliph's home has now been turned into a puzzlesome palace of shark infested rivers, burning deserts and seemingly impenetrable barriers.

The Sceptre is at the far end of the palace, if it is not reached within the ordained time the Caliph's reign will come to a premature end. The Genie promises to help, but his aid is limited to advice as he cannot leave the lamp. Therefore the Caliph begins his quest alone.

The corpulent ruler can move left and right, jump upwards and pass through doors and other entrances. Objects found en route are collected by simply walking over them. Only two objects can be carried at once, the last acquired being displayed at the bottom of the screen. An inventory of items carried is accessed by pressing the space bar.

Sections of the palace and its grounds can only be crossed if the Caliph is in possession of certain objects – the coconut is needed to cross the desert, but the sling and pearl are first required to get the coconut!

The Genie gives a cryptic but useful clue when his lamp is rubbed with the hankie. His patience is limited though – rub too hard and you end up with a clean lamp and no additional information.

If all of this wasn't bad enough, the poor Caliph finds that his palace has been infested by vicious creatures and monsters. Should these beasts touch him, the podgy ruler's life force is diminished until he eventually loses one of his three lives. Turbans at the bottom right of the screen depict the Caliph's remaining lives.

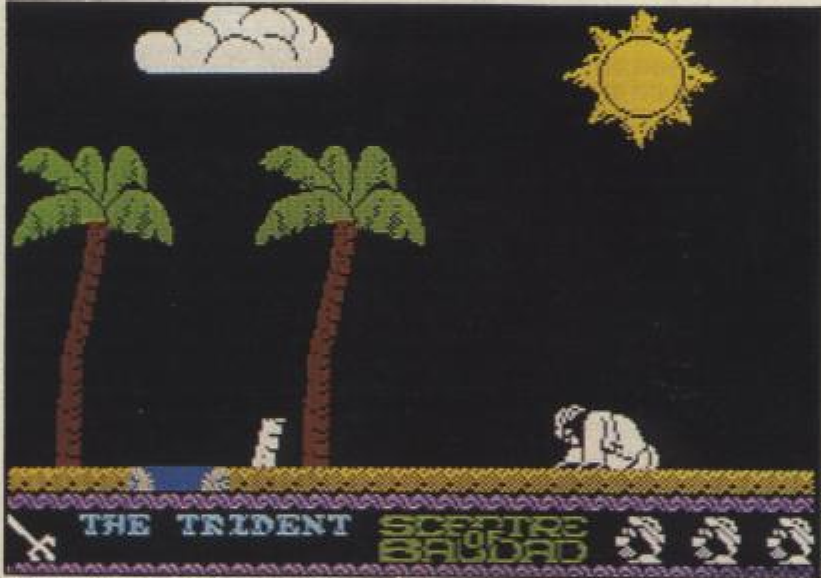
A reincarnation potion is hidden in the palace, saving the player's position when drunk. This position can then be returned to by selecting the 'Old Game' option on the main menu.

GARETH

" **ATLANTIS** have come out with another budget game, 'Ughh !!' I hear you say . . . but wait, they've really pulled their socks up, this is decent. I always like original games, and this is one of the best I've seen for a long time. The well defined graphics move smoothly, but the game could do with a tune and a few more effects during play. The difficulty involved heightens the compulsion to solve the problems, and I'd recommend this to those of you who've got a spare two quid. "

BEN

" Sceptre of Bagdad **puts a lot of full priced software to shame. I'm not sure that the gameplay will appeal to many people, as some of the problems are hard even when a solution is provided – then again many players thrive on that sort of masochism. The graphics are good, but the abundance of static characters gives a lifeless feeling. This is a must if you're an 'if at first you don't succeed' fan – especially at the budget price. "**



► **It's either the time of day to pray, or else the sun is withering the Caliph's comfortable form.**

PAUL

" *Sceptre of Bagdad* has pushed **ATLANTIS** into the world of big time budget software. There are a lot of problems to be solved, but thankfully this process has to be carried out logically. The graphics are very attractive and colourful, and though there are problems in this area, they're not bad enough to put you off. The only thing that this superb product lacks is a decent title tune – so, for £1.99, *Sceptre of Bagdad* is a steal. "

► **Perhaps the magic lantern can help our corpulent Caliph in his mission for the elusive Sceptre?**



COMMENTS

Control keys: defineable - left, right, up, down, select
Joystick: Kempston, Cursor, Interface II
Use of colour: effective and attractive colour scheme
Graphics: well defined and smoothly animated cartoons
Sound: useful but not extraordinary
Skill levels: one
Screens: forty-five
General rating: An entertaining and puzzling arcade adventure.

Presentation	70%
Graphics	79%
Playability	64%
Addictive qualities	75%
Value for money	80%
Overall	75%

GO GET A GREMLIN



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Guide the bouncing ball along a crazy pathway through space. Quick reflexes and good eyesight are essential – not for the faint hearted! *A fast, original game that'll have you hooked!* **88% CRASH November 1986**



Doncha just hate going shopping? Bumping into all those dear Aunties, Great Aunts and Great Great Aunts all with the same insane desire to smother you in kisses and shriek at the top of their voices, 'Oooooh, is that our so-and-so? Hasn't he grown? Well I never did . . . I remember you in nappies . . . ' Hardly makes it worth going down to your local Software purveyor to get all those cut-price games.

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The all action follow-up to *The Way Of The Tiger.* Play the Ninja warrior as he romps around a treacherous maze full of evil creatures just asking to be killed. Are you Ninja enough to retrieve the sacred Scrolls? **85% CRASH January 1987**



BOUNDER

Maddening, addictive action as you attempt to guide Bounder, our rotund hero, through screens of platform action – viewed from overhead! Don't bother keeping to the straight and narrow, just stick to the hexagonal blocks. *The great playability means you'll be coming back to this long after you bounced your first ball!* **90% CRASH SMASH June 1986**

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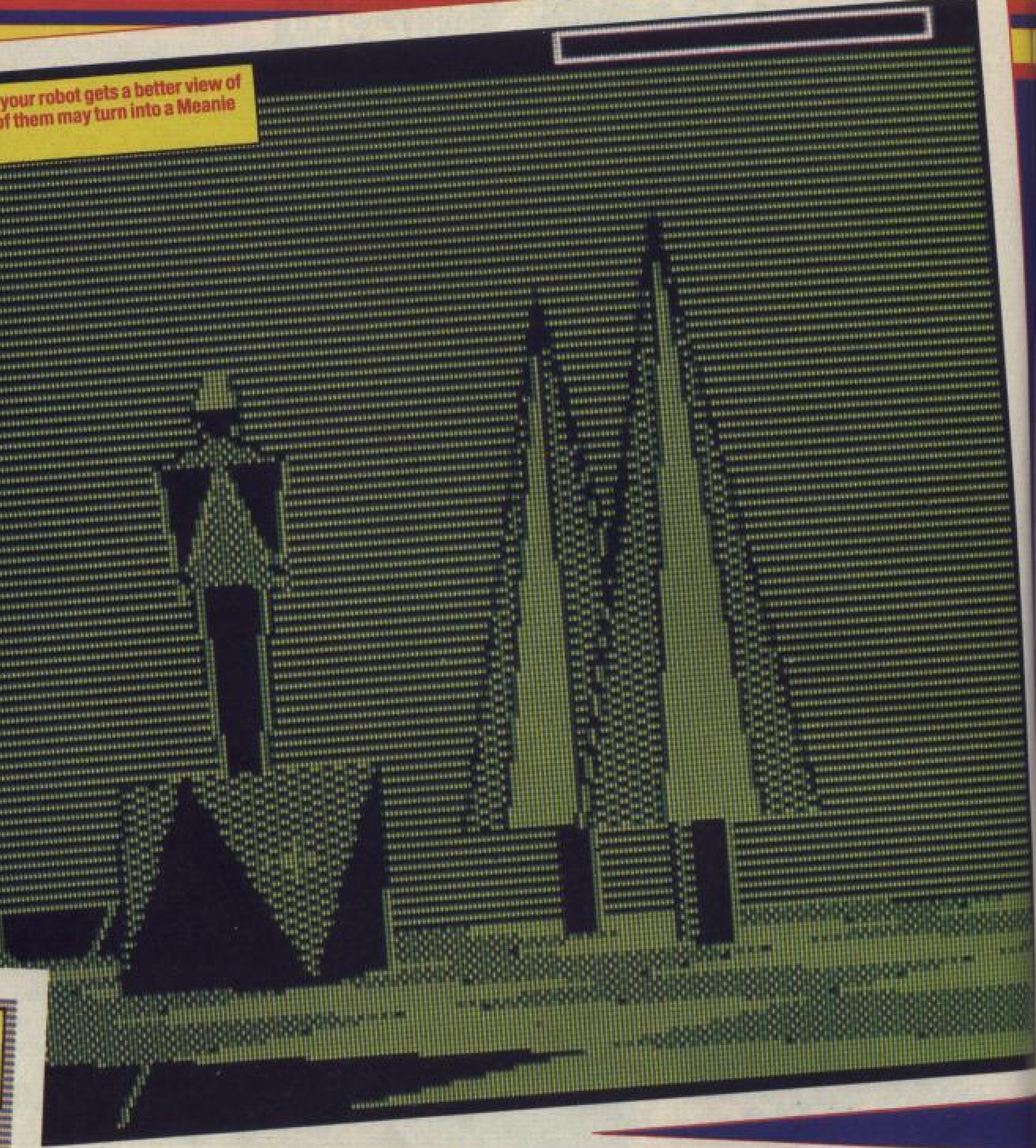
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This special offer is subject to availability and closes on the 30th of May 1987



Having created, or transferred to, a boulder, your robot gets a better view of the landscape. But watch those trees – one of them may turn into a Meanie at any moment.



Big Guy in the distance – The Sentinel stands high on his rock outcrop, commanding the world below.



Landscape 0000 – you don't need an entry code for this one, which probably explains why Cameron photographed it.

Producer: Firebird
Retail Price: **£9.95**
Author: **Geoff Crammond**

T·H·E S·E·N·T·I·N·E·L

Absorption, says the dictionary, is a process whereby one object disappears through incorporation in something else; a sucking in of fluid, light or nutriment. It also means a mental engrossment – and generally, that is the aim of any good game. In *The Sentinel*, FIREBIRD have pared absorption to its most elemental components, and produced a game which they hope is absorbing, and is about absorbing.

Think of 10,000 planets, merely a fraction of the known universe, but almost infinite by man's reckoning. 9,999 of these worlds are under the sway of a supremely powerful malignant being – The Sentinel. What it is, or what its purpose might be, no one knows. What it does, however, is well understood. The Sentinel has slowly but inexorably travelled through the galaxy, absorbing the energies of all the worlds it touches upon, leaving on each one an image of itself and, on some levels, a host of attendant Sentries.

Now it is Earth's turn. There is hope, though. The Sentinel can be attacked by reversing the process, and absorbing energy from it – world by world. The struggle is elemental – you against the Sentinel in a battle of wits played out on a 3D landscape where the chess pieces are your robots, boulders, trees, sentries and units of raw energy.

Where to begin? Any of the worlds may be chosen, as long as you have attained its entry code, thus you are forced to play planet by planet, and you are hyperspaced down to its surface. An aerial view is displayed, showing the relative positions of the Sentinel and its Sentries, before you are placed on the surface. The Sentinel always occupies the highest point of the landscape, you are transported to the lowest. Look around for a while, get the feel of this world. Until you start absorbing or expending energy, your enemies will remain inactive.



CRITICISM

" This is a completely original concept, which has been superbly implemented to produce one of the best computer games ever. It's deceptively simple, but, like Chess or any other game of a similar nature, an awful lot of thought must come into play to succeed in the higher levels. The gameplay is jam-packed with atmosphere and nail-biting tension that's sure to keep you enthralled for a long time. The Sentinel **looks surprisingly good; the landscape is excellently shaded – clear, uncluttered and with superb scrolling. Sound effects and tunettes are of a high standard, but it's a shame that there aren't a few more. This is state-of-the-art software. Buy it. "**

BEN

When you do, The Sentinel and its Sentries begin scanning the landscape, searching for squares containing more than one unit of energy – that's likely to be you. If they can clearly see the square on which you stand, then they reduce its energy level by one unit at a time, creating a tree somewhere else in the process. In turn you can absorb the energy units of objects on the landscape, such as trees or Sentries, or even The Sentinel itself, as long as you can centre on the square they stand on, and then use that energy to create new objects.

The point of this is to make new robots for yourself, transfer to the waiting robot, and then absorb the energy of the robot you have just left. In this way movement around the landscape is possible. Boulders can be stacked up to create higher vantage points for observing and attacking the positions of Sentries and The Sentinel.

A clear strategy is essential. You must hide from the absorption potential of the enemy, yet at the same time manoeuvre into positions of attack. Sometimes the action becomes frenzied. If a Sentry or The Sentinel can see the square you are standing on, a screen scanner warns, and there are five seconds to move before your energy is absorbed. Should the enemy see you, but find your square obscured by landscape, the scanner warns again, then a tree in a better vantage point for the job is transformed into a Meanie to flush you out of hiding. The Meanie rotates rapidly until it can see you, then forces you to hyperspace to a new random location, but probably one not to your liking.

CRITICISM

" The Sentinel **seems appears complex to an onlooker, yet it's fiendishly simple. The landscape may look straightforward, but until you discover The Sentinel's whereabouts and the location the computer sends you to, you'll never know the real task which lies ahead. The fun of** The Sentinel **is the clever mix of occasions when you're frantically pressing all buttons in the hope of escape, and other times when slow, deep thought is needed to find an ideal place to attack from. The addictive qualities are increased greatly by the codes, meaning that you can come back to it months later and still go to the landscape where you left off, without having to go through the same old screens over again.** The Sentinel **defies all adjectives. "**

PAUL

Hyperspacing costs energy units, because the Meanie creates a new robot, transfers you to it, but leaves the old one behind, wasting energy. You may be able to re-absorb it later, however, if it hasn't already been absorbed by The Sentinel.

Gaining fluency with the control of your circumstances is vital for those moments when all hell breaks loose. The view may be panned up or down, left or right through 360°, or snap-turns can be made. A sight may be turned on so that absorption, creation or a transfer may take place. And there are separate controls for creating trees, robots or boulders.

If you manage to defeat The Sentinel by absorbing all its energy, transfer to its position, the highest spot on that world, and hyperspace. You are given a new entry code for another world, another battle, another Sentinel.

CRITICISM

" They told me it would be good, but I didn't expect anything like this. The Sentinel **is brilliant. It's a weird sort of game, not a shoot 'em up, more an absorb 'em up. The concept is not remotely like anything I've ever seen before, and one that is magnificent. If the graphics are jerky, the shading and the change colour option make up for that ten times over.** The Sentinel **is so playable that you go into it for the first time and come out in a trance! "**

MIKE

COMMENTS

Control keys: S/D pan left/right, K/M pan up/down, A to Absorb, T, B and R to create Trees, Boulders and Robots respectively, H to Hyperspace, Q to Transfer
Joystick: Kempston, Interface 2, Cursor
Use of colour: monochrome effect, but background colour-change option
Graphics: excellent line and cross-hatched shading creates solid 3D, the whole scrolling smoothly and fast
Sound: some tunes and limited but effective spot FX
Skill levels: effectively, you make your own
Screens: 10,000 landscapes
General rating: Highly playable and addictive, *The Sentinel* is one of those rare games that makes owning a computer a delight.

Presentation	90%
Graphics	93%
Playability	98%
Addictive qualities	96%
Value for money	95%
Overall	**97%**

BRAINACHE

Producer: Code Masters
Retail Price: **£1.99**
Author: **Owen Brunette**

Private Harry Jones – Brainache to his friends – has once again left his valuable mining equipment down on a planet's surface. This time it's on the planet Nesbit, hidden somewhere in the depths of the Stella mines. Brainache decides that while he's looking for his forgotten equipment he's also going to find the fabled Anatese diamond.

In this one or two player platform-style game, Brainache makes his way along the mine's descending pathways, tunnel systems and lifts. Our joystick or keyboard-controlled adventurer moves left, right, up and down, occasionally dropping to lower levels or climbing up ravines.

Lurking amongst the outcrops and hollows of planetary rock, he finds bothersome butterflies, cosmic spiders and flying goats. Contact with one of these relieves our hero of one of his four lives. Runaway mining trucks, bounding boulders and pernicious plants also lay Brainache out for the count.



Brainache carries a blaster for protection. Points are scored for blasting insects and other creatures, the total being shown at the bottom of the screen.

To help him get further into the mine's shafts and tunnels, the muddled miner picks up tools and items he finds about the place. Brainache's oxygen supply is finite, diminishing from the moment he leaves his shuttle. Another life is lost when the air supply reaches zero, with an oxygen indicator at the bottom of the screen showing the remaining level of life support.

CRITICISM

●" **This game's got a really apt title, as you'll have an aching brain if you fork out any cash for it. The copious use of colour tends to obscure the action – and for some time after playing this I was seeing purple spots. CODE MASTERS have the cheek to put 'Why pay more?' on the loading screen. I think you can probably answer that one for yourself.** "

BEN

●" *Brainache*'s graphics only look good from a distance. The characters are badly drawn, and the way in which colour is splashed about completely ruins the pleasant spiralling effect. The way your character gets trapped in certain areas is really annoying; try standing on top of a lift for instance – Harry gets stuck when you reach the top of the shaft . . . Aaargh! "

MIKE



▶ **Brainy's shuttle's down on Nesbit okay, but the exuberant use of colour obscures his actions.**

COMMENTS

Control keys: Up 3, Down E, Left G, Right H, Take U, Drop 8, Fire X, Climb N
Joystick: Kempston, Cursor, Interface 2
Use of colour: gaudy, unnecessary and eye-straining
Graphics: a confusingly detailed backdrop with annoyingly small characters
Sound: loading screen cacophony and uninspired effects
Skill levels: one
Screens: one vertically scrolling landscape
General rating: A failed attempt to bring scrolling colour to the Spectrum screen.

Presentation	61%
Graphics	40%
Playability	29%
Addictive qualities	28%
Value for money	34%
Overall	29%

TOMB OF SYRINX

Producer: The Power House
Retail Price: **£1.99**
Author: **Ayyaz Mehmood**

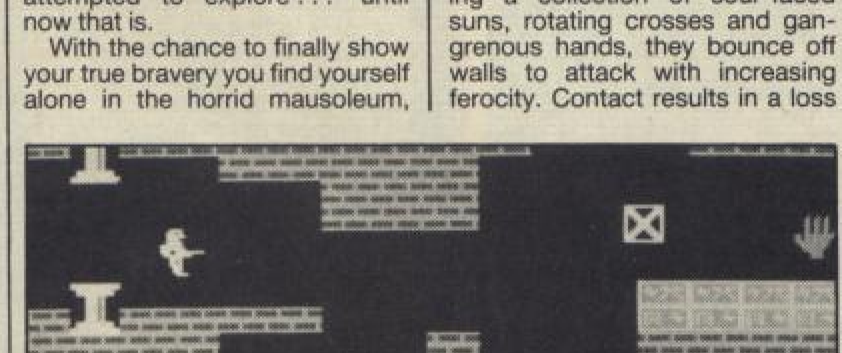
The Tomb of Syrinx is an ancient and deadly place which no man has ever attempted to explore . . . until now that is.

With the chance to finally show your true bravery you find yourself alone in the horrid mausoleum, armed only with your laser gun. There is only once chance of escape from this foul place, the five keys of the Tomb must be found and collected. Perhaps an easy task, if it was not for the strange Immune Guardians.

On entry to the Tomb, these Guardians give a few moments of grace before attacking. Resembling a collection of sour-faced suns, rotating crosses and gangrenous hands, they bounce off walls to attack with increasing ferocity. Contact results in a loss of life. To avoid them you are able to move the left and right, or up and down, through the maze of corridors and rooms.

The laser gun is used to destroy Guardians, but some are resilient, and several shots have to strike home before these meet their maker. Points are awarded for each kill, the score being displayed at the bottom right.

But Immune Guardians are not the only enemy encountered. Snakes, scorpions wait to bite or sting, and bandaged mummies kill. Five lives are available to you, the number remaining being shown at the bottom right corner of the screen.



CRITICISM

●" **There were loads of games around like this about four years ago, so it beats me why THE POWER HOUSE have released one now. Especially as this leaves a lot to be desired, the three character scroll and evil maze and deadly inanimate objects make the game infuriatingly unplayable. The graphics are well below average, with small characters and an undetailed playing area. Even with the free audio track this doesn't really offer good value for money.** "

BEN

●" *THE POWER HOUSE haven't made a good impression so far, and* Tomb Of Syrinx *does nothing to change this. The characters are badly drawn and the animation is basic and jerky. There's no tune, and the little sound that's there is easily ignored. I had no fun at all playing this as it seemed to be a very ordinary idea which was badly programmed. Even at the budget price it should be quickly ignored.* "

PAUL

COMMENTS

Control keys: Z/X left/right, P/L up/down, zero to fire
Joystick: Kempston, Interface 2 Cursor
Use of colour: poor
Graphics: small and simple
Sound: limited spot FX
Skill levels: one
Screens: scrolling play area
General rating: Not very good value, even at its low price.

Presentation	40%
Graphics	24%
Playability	25%
Addictive qualities	22%
Value for money	26%
Overall	26%


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MARTIANOIDS

Producer: Ultimate
Retail Price: **£9.95**
Author: **The Ultimate Team**

The 'Markon Dawn' slides through deep space – a vast robot ship sent to search for new life forms and knowledge. Cocooned within is the largest and most powerful computer known to the Markon Empire – The Brain of Markon.

As the ship passes through alien territory it is attacked by Martianoids. These maggot their way through The Brain of Markon disrupting its programs, wriggling between sectors like damp hand towels.

It is imperative that The Brain is defended . . .

You have control of a defending droid which can protect and steer randomly transmitted programs between Transmitter and Receiver in each sector. With its destination successfully reached the program activates defence mechanisms preventing further damage to that Brain section. When all nine sectors are activated The Brain is safe.

The droid itself can come under attack from Martianoids, to avoid them it can move to the left or right, and forwards. Energy is drained from the droid by contact with kamikaze Martianoids, though the alien's resultant death does give extra points. When energy levels become low, batteries about the Brain can be used for recharging. An indicator at the base of the screen shows battery level, should it drop to zero, the droid loses one of its four lives.

For defence, the droid carries lasers and blasters capable of destroying Aliens. Their use requires care if internal walls, active components and replacement cones are not to be taken out. A score is awarded for each Martianoid killed.

The photon weapons of the Martianoids can destroy all that is in their path. Components that have received damage can be substituted using Replacement Cones and the droid's 'pick up and drop' facility. Should all Active Components in a sector be destroyed then that sector is dead. Replacement Cones can be used to block off disposal chutes, if a program slips down one it is lost.

The droid's position, and that of the program within The Brain are displayed on a grid map. The status of each sector is indicated by colour – white indicates sector activation, flashing red and yellow signifies an attack by Martianoids, whilst red means sector death.

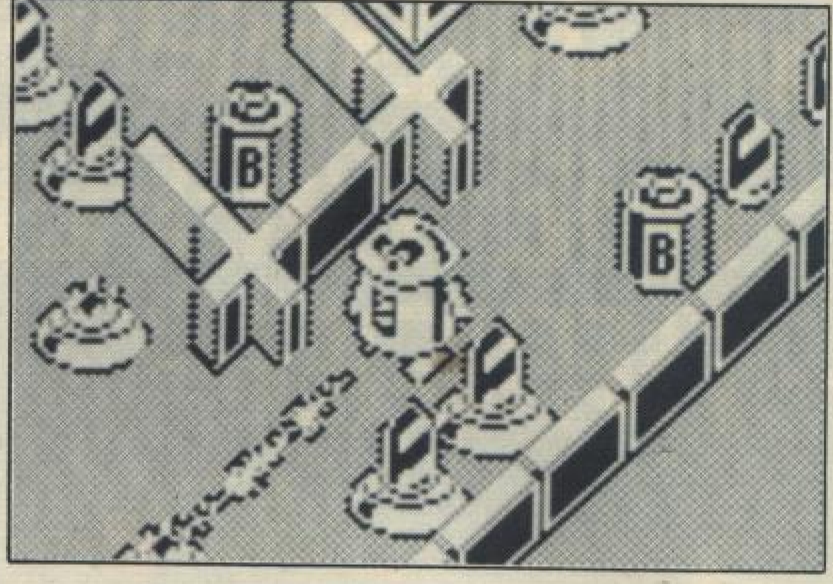
A scrolling display supplies updated information on what is happening in parts of the Brain which is currently off screen.

MIKE

" ULTIMATE have gradually gone down in everyone's view, and producing a game as boring as this just emphasises the apparent demise of the 'once mighty' company. It's a pity to see such a reputation fade, but it's their own fault; *Martianoids* has pretty graphics, but little else, as there isn't much interest to be found in it's walls. "

BEN

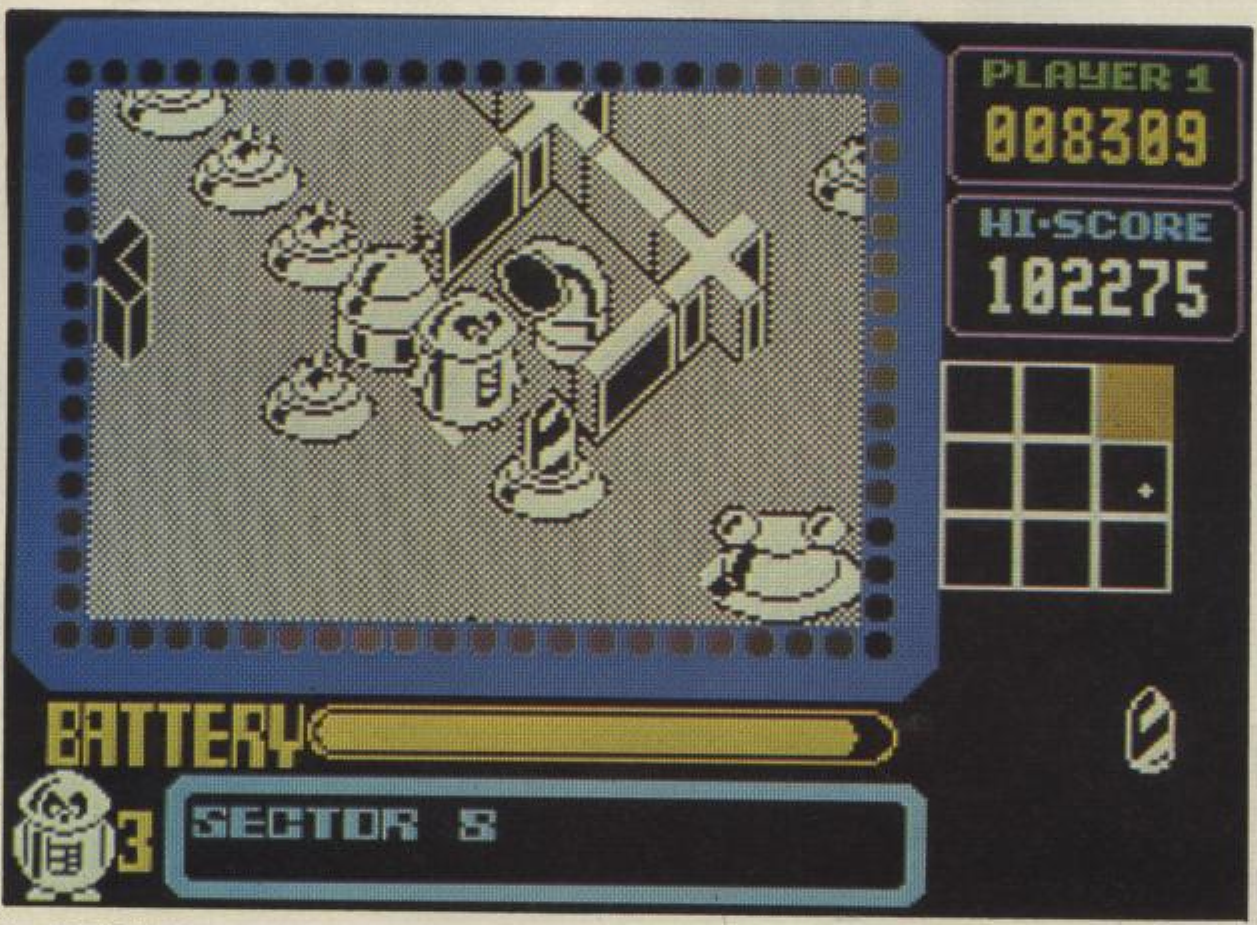
" Shock, excitement, hysteria . . . An ULTIMATE game, hooray! Oh, hang on, it's not very good is it? Oh well perhaps we'll have to idolise someone else now. I've been playing this for ages now and I can't get the hang of it at all – then again most 'Ultimates' did take a while to get into but not this long surely. The graphics are a bit naff when compared to greats such as *Pentagram* and *Gunfright* and the sound is simply below average. *Martianoids* lacks the gameplay and general 'finish' that we've come to expect from ULTIMATE. "



PAUL

" ULTIMATE *return with a new distributor, but the same old 3D game. The graphics have taken a dive since the days of* Knight Lore. *These don't seem to have the appeal or the colour of the original stuff. The control method is much too slow and unresponsive to use successfully. I loved the old stuff but this is something completely different. Don't buy it because of the name.* "

► **Like damp hand towels, the Martianoids maggot their way into the Brain of Markon. Only your defending droid can save the day . . .**



COMMENTS

Control keys: C B M right, A S D . . . ENTER forward, Q E T U O laser, W R Y I P blaster, 1 2 3 .. 0 Z SYMBOL SHIFT pick up/drop
Joystick: Kempston, Cursor Interface 2
Use of colour: monochrome playing area with decorative edges
Graphics: smooth 3D animation
Sound: average tune and effects
Skill levels: one
Screens: continuously scrolling map
General rating: Not up to Ultimate's usual standard.

Presentation	79%
Graphics	74%
Playability	55%
Addictive qualities	56%
Value for money	54%
Overall	58%



▶ Doc's well-animated face expresses his emotions as the action rolls along, but there's little else to see in the game.

DOC THE DESTROYER

Producer: Melbourne House
Retail Price: **£7.95**
Author: **Paul Kidd and Geoff Evans**

Doc the Destroyer is the first of an advanced race of superbeings with programmable levels of strength, endurance, intelligence, luck and charisma. Each of these attributes is assigned a value, from a total of 60 available points. And just as well too, for the bewildered Doc now finds himself in a scarcely habitable Earth of the far future.

Remnants of the human race live in and around a city surrounded by an energy dome. Society has divided into a band of Priests controlling the Tower of Knowledge, the populace who live in the rest of the city, and mutants cast from its boundaries.

Doc is accused of spying for the hated priests and becomes the object of a manhunt. He escapes, but with little money and only a wooden club for protection.

Location descriptions scroll down the right-hand side of the screen – arcade adventure style – with a menu window displaying the available options.

Doc's characteristics determine his ease of progress – a high level of luck enables him to slip past guards unnoticed, whilst the higher the degree of intelligence he possesses, the greater his ability to influence the minds of other men. Our hero is forced into combat with bounty hunters, horrendous hounds, and psychopathic slugs.

The endurance levels of Doc and his enemy are depicted as shrinking bars below the combat zone, diminishing with each sustained hit. A character dies when his endurance drops to zero.

CRITICISM

●" **I was eager to play this new release from MELBOURNE HOUSE as I'm a very keen role-player. But I was really disappointed, this arcade–adventure places its emphasis on killing horrible little nasties and not much thought has been put into adventuring. Doc's facial expressions are nicely animated, as are most of the graphics – but the gameplay is a bit tedious.** "

GARETH

●" Doc the Destroyer *is an interesting concept, but the idea has not been developed to its full potential. The graphics vary from a superb Doc face that reacts to your decisions down to a terrible fighting sequence. The best screen is without a doubt the characteristics section – it's a game within itself.* Doc The Destroyer *doesn't contain enough to be fun to play. Doc is a good character, but the game doesn't suit him.* "

PAUL

●" The concept appears to be quite attractive, but its implementation leaves a lot to be desired. Why MELBOURNE HOUSE should use the unattractive Sinclair character set for a game which relies so heavily on text leaves me mystified. The idea of having Doc's face to convey the characters emotional responses to your actions is a good one, and that remains the single best aspect. "

MIKE

COMMENTS

Control keys: Q up, Z down, I left, P right, SPACE fire
Joystick: Kempston, Interface 2
Use of colour: two colour playing area, but colourful illustration left of text window
Graphics: basic and simply animated
Sound: little more than white noise
Skill levels: one
Screens: two
General rating: A good concept, let down by a poor implementation.

Presentation	57%
Graphics	54%
Playability	38%
Addictive qualities	38%
Value for money	35%
Overall	41%



CYROX

Producer: The Power House
Retail Price: **£1.99**
Author: **Grant Jaquest**

A consignment of priceless crystals has been stolen by Silas Maximillian, the most wanted man in the galaxy. Only Luther Irontooth has any chance of retrieving them from Maximillian's headquarters on a far-off, dead planet.

The crystals are held in three storage vaults deep in a labyrinth of corridors. Two vaults are readily accessible, but one is locked, and entry to it can only be made by finding and using five keys.

Irontooth teleports down to the planet clad in full battle armour – here he's able to move left, right, up and down. However, once moving, momentum keeps him going until he hits an obstruction, or uses his blaster-pack to change direction. Luther possesses nine freeze bombs to help him avoid the lethal embrace of vicious robots. Created in the form of jellyfish or flop-eared bunnies, they're simply programmed and only move in basic patterns – but particular care needs to be taken in the two open vaults, as the guard robots move a lot faster than Luther. Using a freeze bomb gives Luther five seconds in which to dodge the stunned robot and continue on his way.

Remaining freeze bombs are displayed on screen, along with Luther's score.

Diminishing energy puts a time limit on the quest, and Luther's energy level is also shown on screen, with one of four lives lost when it reaches zero.

CRITICISM

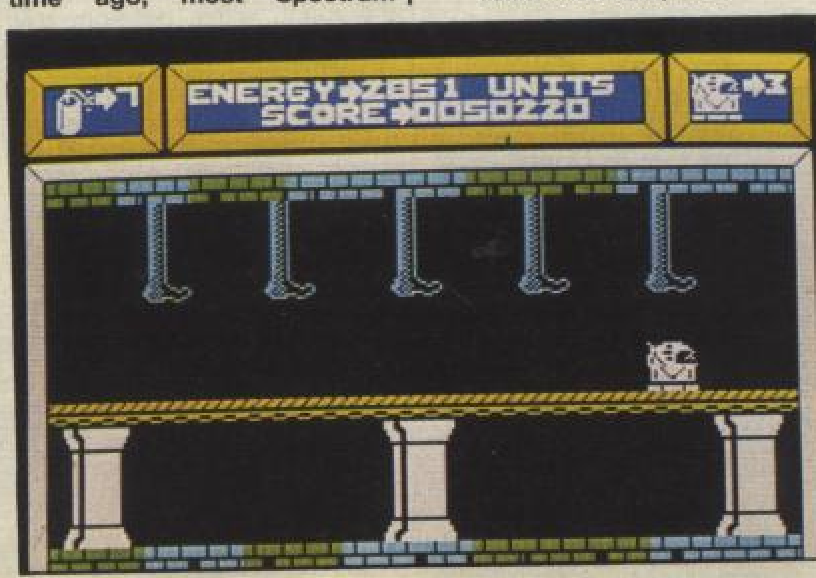
● " **This takes me back. Some time ago, most Spectrum games were similar to this – playable enough then, but not now. Did the graphics have to be as simplistic, undetailed and uninteresting as they have turned out? The sound, too, is well below average with no tunes and generally dull effects. Even with the addition of a free game this represents poor value for money.** "

BEN

● " Budget games are all the rage this month, so *Cyrox* has a lot of competition. Run-of-the-mill graphics offer fairly smooth animation, a few nicely drawn characters and lots of tasteless colours. However, despite *Cyrox*'s many primitive aspects, I quite enjoyed playing it for a while. POWER HOUSE have had a good go at producing a decent shoot 'em up, and they're providing as much as you can expect for £1.99. "

GARETH

▶ Clad in his battle armour, Luther Irontooth resembles the robot from Poppysoft's classic oldie, Factory Breakout – and indeed, the game harks back to that period.



COMMENTS

Control keys: Q up, A down, O left, P right, M Freeze Bomb
Joystick: Kempston, Cursor, Interface 2
Use of colour: reasonably clash free, if a bit tasteless
Graphics: small characters and jerky scrolling
Sound: varied spot effects
Skill levels: one
Screens: three scrolling screens
General rating: A below average budget title.

Presentation	40%
Graphics	49%
Playability	42%
Addictive qualities	36%
Value for money	50%
Overall	46%

NETHER EARTH

Producer: Argus Press
Retail Price: **£9.95**

Earth has been captured by an evil race, The Insignians. Patrolling the planet in robotic war machines, they keep the population in slavery.

As with all dictatorships a seed of resistance grows. For the first time since the Insignian domination, an enemy base, Kerberus, has been captured by the forces of Captain Fergus McCaffery. Human hope is rekindled, the invaders can be defeated, but only if their three remaining bases can be destroyed.

GARETH

"Nether Earth is great fun, especially when it comes to building your own robot – the inlay card is well worth a read before designing commences. The graphics are reasonably good and the characters are well defined. The layout and shadowing effects are reminiscent of Zaxxon, and make the position of your anti–grav vehicle very easy to distinguish. The best feature is that there is no annoying sound to put you off, except when you attack the enemy which is a great help. The game is a bit expensive but well worth it."

Six enemy war factories are scattered around the playing area. None are currently in production, but they are activated by the arrival of first enemy robot. Putting these plants out of commission prevents the Insignians from rebuilding their stocks of weaponry. Time is limited, and The longer McCaffery takes to assemble and deploy his forces, the stronger the enemy becomes.

An anti-grav machine is used for reconnaisance flights, above enemy territory and across formidable landscape. A radar at the base of the screen shows the position of the robot under control, in relation to other robots and the terrain.

This same machine is used in the production and control of Resistance robot forces. Landing on the anti-grav pad at the home warbase gives access to the robot production schedule.

The home forces start with 20 resource units, (labour, parts, materials and forces) to their credit, to which units are added each day from their factories and warbases. War machines are built from these for combat, defence or factory capture.

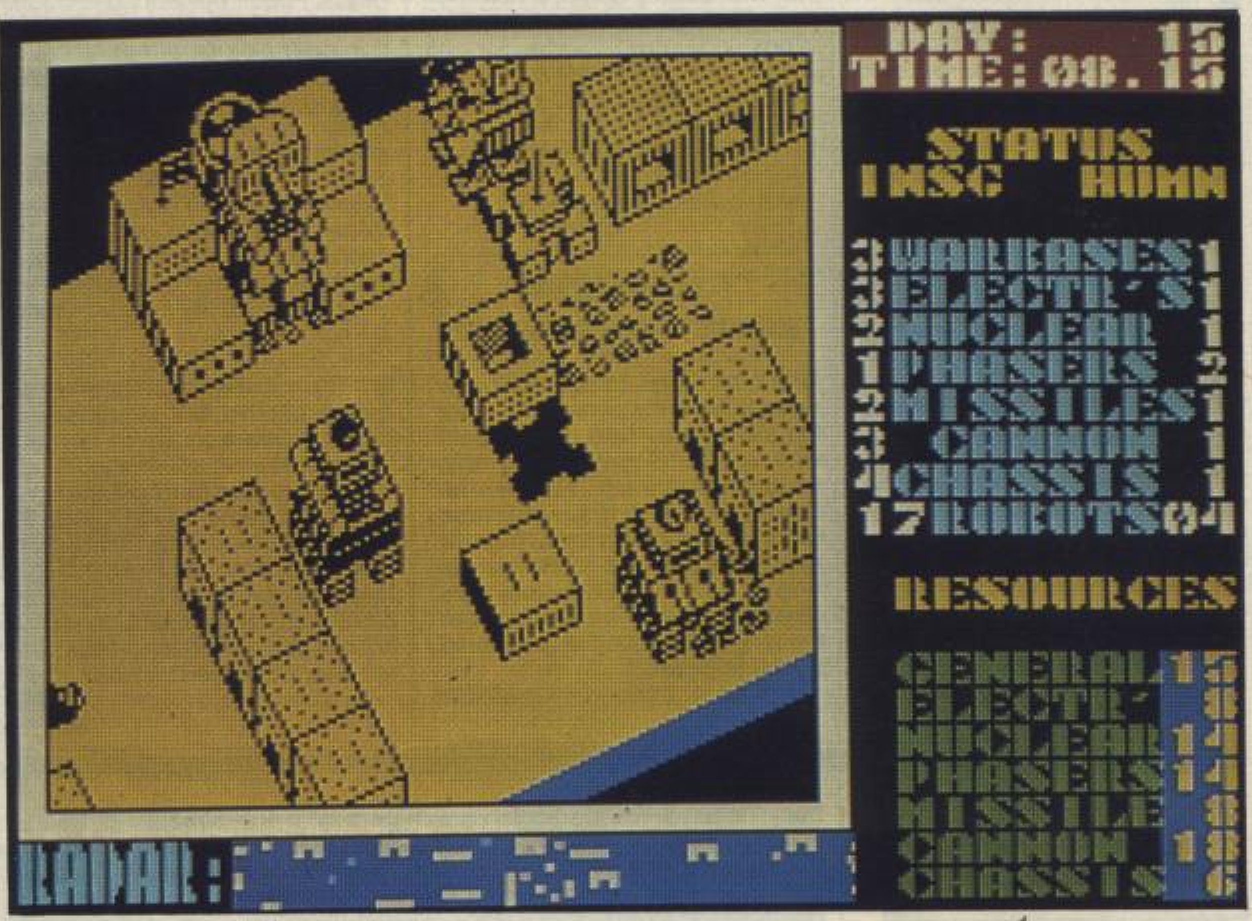
MIKE

"I didn't really like *Nether Earth* the first time I played it – it wasn't too long before the game really began to unfold, and when it did, I found it much more playable. I especially enjoyed the robot building sequence, but the rest is equally worth looking at. It's not a fast aggressive shoot 'em up as the inlay might lead you to believe, but it is fun and quite reasonable at the price."

BEN

"ARGUS PRESS seem to be good at releasing original games that lack severely in gameplay and content. Nether Earth **does a lot to change this though, being a strange mix of strategy and action that works surprisingly well. This appeal may be short lived though as it becomes a little monotonous when you start to lose (and you lose a lot in your first couple of goes). The sound is above average, there are some effects during the game and the music on the title screen is very good considering the limitations of the 48K machine. Well worth a look and a great improvement from ARGUS."**

allowed to act independently, searching for and destroying enemy targets that come within their range.



▶ **The 17th World War has begun. Your constructed droid moves against the Insignians in a desperate attempt to overthrow their dictatorship.**

Different robots possess different capabilities and functions – a tracked chassis gives good manoeuvrability, but is costly, whilst an anti-grav chassis can fly over any ground type, but is more expensive still. Weapons such as phaser, missile and nuclear modules all have different ranges and lethal forces. Enemy bases and factories can only be destroyed using the nuclear capability, but this takes out anything, including the carrying robot, within an eight mile radius.

Valuable resources are used as robots are assembled, with remaining units shown on the right hand side of the screen. A maximum of 24 war machines can be constructed by either side.

Robots are controllable by landing the anti-grav machine on top of them, they can then move to the left or right, up or down, between buildings, through rough terrain and around ravines. However only one can be controlled at a time.

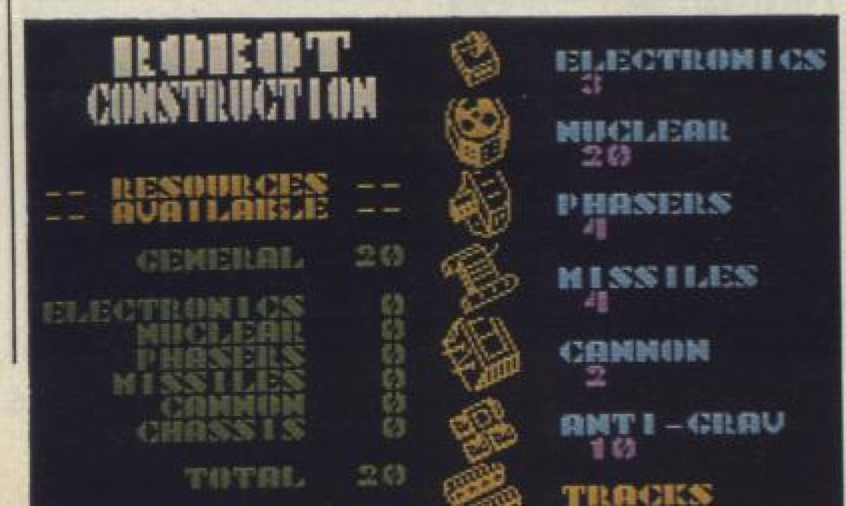
Each of these war machines can be fed with instructions and

COMMENTS

Control keys: definable; up, down, left, right and fire needed
Joystick: Kempston, Interface 2, Cursor
Use of colour: monochromatic playing area
Graphics: simple perspective, but effective
Sound: good tune and above average spot FX
Skill levels: one
General rating: An engaging game after a few plays, which rings some fresh changes on older themes.

Presentation	74%
Graphics	74%
Playability	71%
Addictive qualities	73%
Value for money	72%
Overall	**75%**

▶ **Hours of fun may be had with the Robot Construction Screen.**





Is This Really Auf Wiedersehen Monty?
Ah mole oh meeo
I wonder what's on at the ... ROUGE'
These squeaking windmoles are driving me mad!
Just a few lines between continental heists and yet more hairy escapades to say hello to all my fans and invite you on my most exciting and exacting journey to date, a whistle stop tour of the capitals of Europe acquiring more than just the local scenery on the way.
Oops... must dash... gendarmes hot on my tail. Will write again soon with more news of my exhilarating escapades and growing booty bag.
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KORONIS RIFT

Producer: Activision
Retail Price: **£7.99**
Author: **Lucasfilm**

Abandoned technical systems are worth big dollars, so techno scavengers like yourself search unknown worlds for scrap. At last you have found the big one, you have discovered the El Dorado of technology – Koronis Rift – a mountainous planet cut by valleys, where the Ancients once tested their powerful weapons.

But first the planet must be checked out. So with Psytek, the Science Droid Systems Analyser controlling the orbiting Scoutcraft, you descend in a Surface Rover carrying a Repo-Tech (RT) Robot.

On landing, the planet's surface is revealed, with an illuminated dot display indicating the nearest concentration of Ancient technology. Starting at the top of the display, the Rover moves in the direction of the hulk. A drive system moves the craft to the left, right and forward, with speed and engine status shown at the top of the screen. By returning to the Scoutcraft and selecting the appropriate option the next, or next but one rift can be investigated.

To help in your efforts, the Rover carries up to six modules: Laser, Defensive Shield, Generator, Power Reserve, Radar, Enemy Detection equipment, Propulsive Drive and other, as yet unknown systems. Additional systems can be overseen using the supplementary monitors at the top of the main screen and are incorporated in the Rover using an 'Add Module' option.

Guardian Saucers attack in an attempt to frustrate your scavenging plans, these can be destroyed, or evaded by cutting through passes and staying close to mountains.

The Rover carries a shield and laser based on one of six different, electromagnetic energy frequencies. Shields defend best against a similarly coloured attacking lasers but are less effective against other colours, whilst lasers are most destructive against dissimilarly coloured shields.

All Rover systems require power, with 10% being given over to weapons. When non-weapon systems are under-utilising energy, the excess is transferred to attack and defence systems. Insufficient power causes systems to operate at reduced efficiency. A reserve power display at the top of the screen indicates levels available for weapons, if these are low shield efficiency may be impaired. The same display is used to determine the requirements of additional modules and so avoid excessive energy drains. The acquisition of a beefier generator unit increases power levels.

High radiation levels make it dangerous for you to leave the safety of your Rover when a hulk is discovered. By stopping the Rover close to the wreck and using on-screen options, the RT Robot collects and brings back useful systems. Not all hulks contain useful equipment, and only by returning to the Scoutcraft and using the analysing Psytek can you really determine what is is of true value.

The Scoutcraft can be returned to at any time where the science Droid Psytek assesses collected modules which pass before it on a conveyor. An inventory of stored modules can be called up and individual items analysed or dismantled.

MIKE

" There's a lot to get used to in *Koronis Rift*, but it becomes enjoyable when you get the feel of it. The graphics are unusual, and despite being a little jerky they're quite impressive. There is a distinct lack of sound; I didn't notice a tune and the effects are minimal – play it with your Walkman on!! Obviously, it's not as good as its sister versions, but taking into account the fact that it wasn't designed to run on a Spectrum, someone's done a good job. Definitely worth a look – a shoot 'em up with a difference. "

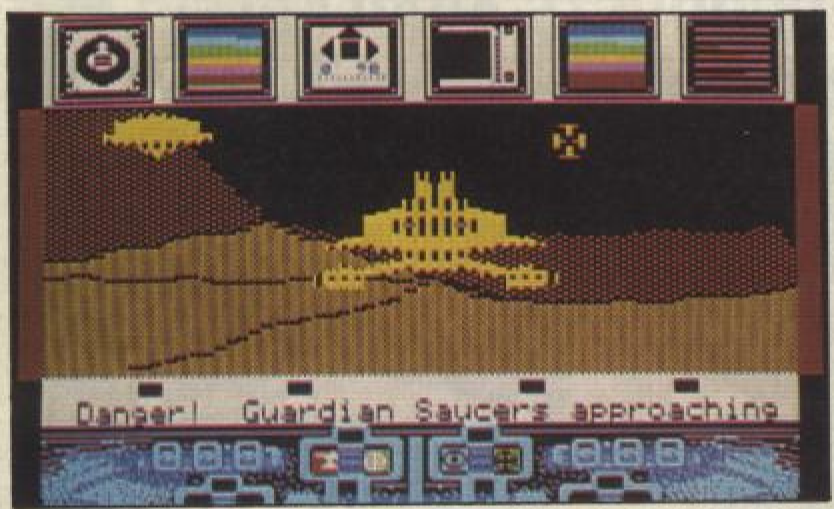
PAUL

" I feel sorry for the people that had the job of translating this for the Spectrum – but they've done quite well considering. The graphics are of the same type used in Rescue on Fractalus, *with a superior choice of colour. The ship moves quite slowly, but the robot in mid-section is nicely animated. The trading and fights are good fun to start with, but the gameplay contains little else. The main problem is that the Spectrum wasn't designed to be converted to, so maybe next time* LUCASFILM *will try something original . . . "*

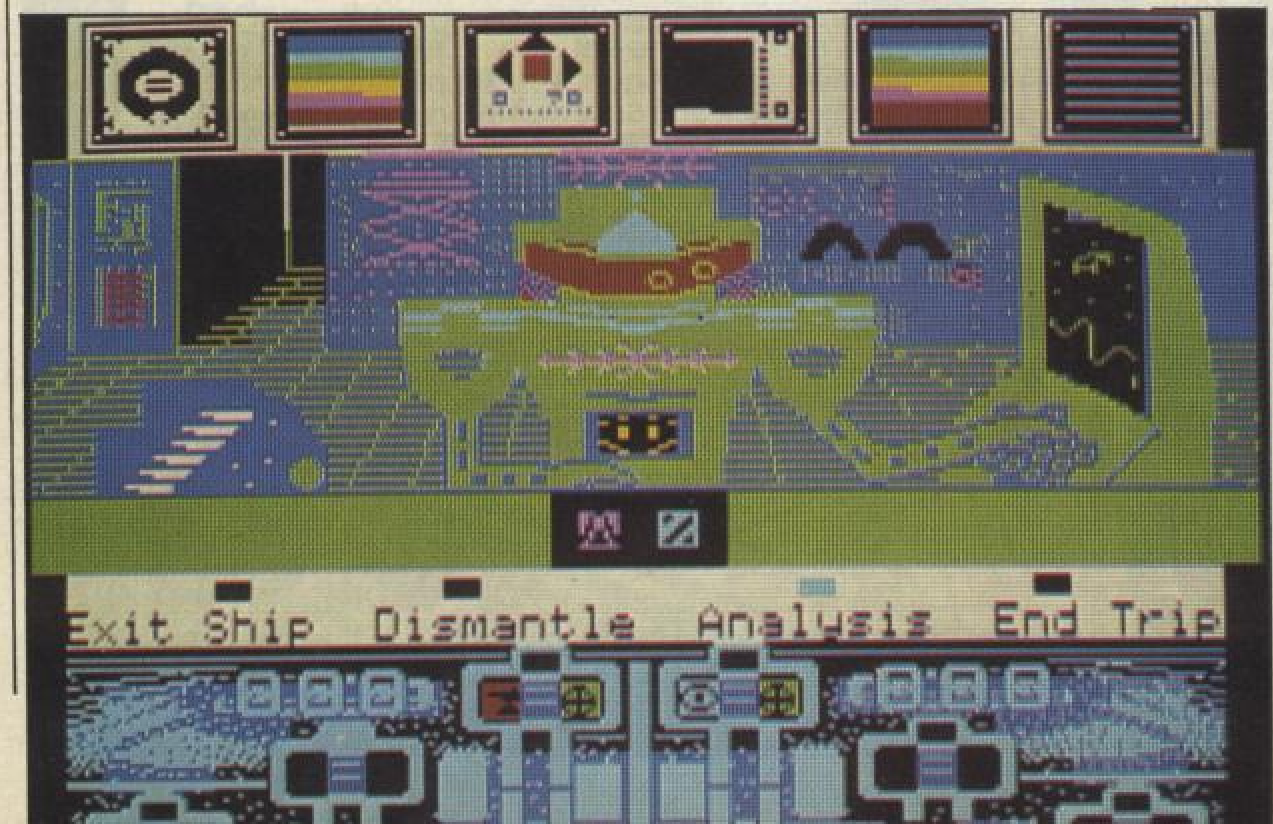
BEN

" Koronis Rift **is the type of game which takes hours to get started, there are so many different functions to get used to. However, once mastered it's is great fun to play – basically it is a shoot 'em up game with a lot of add-ons. The graphics are a bit of a problem though; too much colour has been put into the very detailed characters, generating a flickery and messy screen. There is also a definite lack of sound, but this doesn't cause any problems.**

▶ **Fractal graphics from Lucasfilm animate the landscape through which you travel. Watch out for those dangerous Guardian Saucers!**



▶ **Psytek the friendly on-board android finally makes it to the Spectrum screen.**



COMMENTS

Control keys: A/D left/right, S to move forward/stop, zero to fire
Joystick: Kempston, Interface 2, Cursor
Use of colour: quite rich
Graphics: famous fractals strike again, and work very well
Sound: no tunes and minimal FX
Skill levels: one
Screens: 20 rifts
General rating: An imaginative science fiction game, translated to the Spectrum with reasonable success.

Presentation	66%
Graphics	71%
Playability	64%
Addictive qualities	68%
Value for money	66%
Overall	70%



PSI 5 TRADING COMPANY

Producer: **US Gold**
Retail Price: **£7.95**
Author: **Mike Lorenzen and Mimi Doggett**

The Psi 5 trading company carries anything, anywhere, anytime, it has to . . . it needs the money. At present the big dollars are earned hauling freight through the Parvin Frontier to the beleaguered mining settlements beyond.

As captain you have control of a freighter headed for that space quarter. Courses and cargoes can be chosen to maximise reward – but the larger the profit the greater the danger; space pirates are active en route, and may attempt to board. But try and avoid them and you could be forced onto a route too long for your perishable cargo.

Candidates for the six crew are available, including aliens, droids and humans. The ability profiles of potential candidates can be viewed and their suitability for the mission assessed. Select the crew with the best abilities for your journey – success may depend upon it.

MIKE

" From all the glossy advertising and packaging, I was really expecting a good game. As if I didn't know better! The concept is brilliant, with stacks of potential for a mega-game, but US GOLD's version is far from that. I'm not saying that it's bad, but if a game can be both mind-blowingly complicated and still have insufficient content to make it interesting, then *Psi 5* is just about as good a cross as you'll be able to find. Essentially, it's a fun, but I think my general feeling, coming away from it, is one of disappointment. "

The mission can now begin.

As ship's captain, you sit before a two screened communications console, a space scan on the left and with the portrait of the crew member you are commanding displayed on the right. Screen indicators give weapon status, motion, speed and heading. Using the ship's communication system, messages can be passed between departments, tasks assigned, priorities changed, commands added or countermanded. Crew members *do* obey orders but are a wilful bunch, and can take it upon themselves to perform tasks if not instructed quickly enough.

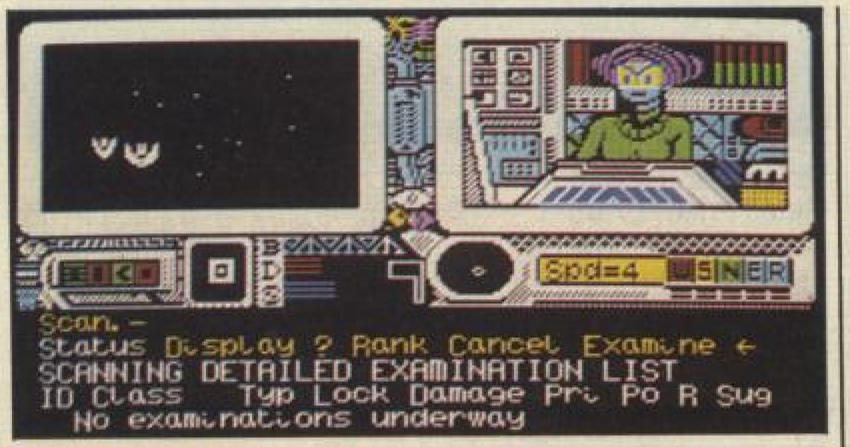
All departments are under the Captain's ultimate control – whilst giving orders to one department the status of another can be monitored on the icon display. From the navigation department course and speed can be set and evasive manouevring performed; a risk monitor indicates if insurmountable odds lie ahead.

The scanning department tracks and identifies other craft and works closely with the weapons section. From here target information, ammunition status and past performance of personnel can be checked. Both friendly and hostile ships can be destroyed, so they should be identified before engaging.

Equipment power is regulated from the engineering department. Engines and defensive shields (which require a minimum energy flow to operate effectively) eat into the ship's power reserve. In order to efficiently manage the ship's systems, different departments can have their power shut off to conserve energy.

The repair department undertakes damage assessment and rectification to the ship's equipment. Robodroids can help the repair department's personnel, but are not continually available as time is taken re-allocating them between tasks, collecting tools or travelling to damage sites. Certain crucial items should be fixed as soon as possible – cargo support devices, life support systems, and power reactors are essential to your operation. Should the ship ever be allowed to flounder in space with dead engines, shields and weapons, pirates can board and loot the cargo.

Protect your ship from too much damage as repair costs are deductible from your overall profits.



▶ **The action in the left-hand screen is being monitored by the crew-member seen in the right-hand screen.**

PAUL

" I was really looking forward to this strange trading game – the thing is that it's just a bit too strange for my liking. The whole presentation of the game is full of colour (and clashes), but is let down by the input method used, and the over-responsive keys. I tried all I could for ages, but didn't feel that I could get anywhere with it. Psi 5 *on the Spectrum just doesn't work at all. I'm extremely disappointed with it as it's no fun to play. "*

GARETH

" This is not a typical arcade game, but it has plenty of fast action. To get anywhere you need to persevere, due to there being so many things to monitor at the same time. The impressive instruction sheet comes in very handy for the first play, as it describes each aspect in great detail. The game itself is quite impressive, each crew member is given character and personality by well animated and colourful graphics. There's very little sound, but it's not needed and would be annoying. Overall Psi 5**is addictive with its smooth running, but it probably won't appeal to any arcade game freaks. "**

COMMENTS

Control keys: left/right cursors, Caps Shift to fire and cursors plus Enter for crew selection
Joystick: none
Use of colour: lots of colour, but some inevitable attribute clash
Graphics: detailed and nicely animated
Sound: very little
Skill levels: one
Screens: one main playing screen with sub-screen detail
General rating: A great game that has somehow lost potential in implementation; more appealing to strategists than arcade players.

Presentation	76%
Graphics	69%
Playability	58%
Addictive qualities	59%
Value for money	54%
Overall	**58%**

▶ **From your command console, you can 'talk' to the human, alien and android crew, as well as directing their actions.**



SHORT CIRCUIT

Producer: Ocean
Retail Price: **£7.95**
Author: **Paul Owens**

Our hero, Number Five is no ordinary robot – well, not any more anyway. All was fine, until the unfortunate android was struck by a freak bolt of lightning which raised his logical circuitry towards the level of human consciousness. Now, to all intents and purposes he is 'alive' – and he prefers it that way.

Number Five's creators, the scientists from the Nova Corporation, want to pull him apart diode by diode, in order to find out how his circuits have been able to assume human qualities. This doesn't make the nouveau human particularly happy, and he begins to plot his escape . . .

BEN

" **I don't know what to make of** Short Circuit. **The first part lacks depth, but is somehow still compelling – and the second is merely an arcade-pattern game (which also appeals for some obscure reason). The graphics are very good, with the main character well drawn and animated – the rooms and backgrounds are also pretty (if a little sparse). The sound is up to** OCEAN **'s usual high standards; there's a great tune on the title screen and some useful effects during play.** Short Circuit **works well, but I'd recommend a couple of trial plays before buying.** "

The game takes up the story in the Nova Robotics building, with The factory complex displayed in isometric perspective – that is, three of the current room's four walls in view. Number Five is not yet fully equipped to escape, and begins by collecting a few items to expand his powers. These add the capacity to jump and fire a laser to his basic capability of simply trundling around. A computer printer in the status area monitors Five's activities, and two bar meters reveal the status of his laser and mechanical frame.

To escape, Five has to log-on to the Nova computer. This gives the robo-hero access to three program routines: Search, Read and Use. Search is the most vital, enabling Five to examine desks, cupboards, coat racks – in fact, anything in the factory where something useful might be hidden.

Linking doors between the rooms are occasionally locked, while others require a security pass. Therefore, finding keys and passes is high on Five's agenda.

Before Number five can attempt to leave he needs to have in his possession all the correct objects and components. If anything has been left uncollected, he's immediately captured. A successful escape allows the player to load up the second half of the game – a frantic chase.

The chase sequence sees Five dashing over a horizontally scrolling rural landscape. Number five is so sensitive that if he injures a creature, grief overloads his emotion circuits, immobilising him for a while and leaving him prey to the Guards who follow his tracks. Five can jump and fire, but his shots aren't deadly – the guards are simply stunned. Other Nova Robots also pursue Five, and like the Guards, they can be temporarily disabled by laser fire. While the fugitive is busy dealing with his pursuers he must also avoid hazards such as rocks, logs, puddles and the occasional lake – falling into the lake is fatal, as it shorts out the robot's circuitry.

A van awaits at the end of the chase, and, providing Five arrives there without being detected by the Nova Helicopter, he can make his escape to freedom. What he gets up to then is another story altogether . . .

RICKY

" *Short Circuit* is one of the best film licences for ages and represents good value with the inclusion of a second, and very different, game. The first part, the 3D arcade adventure, is constructed well with just the right amounts of exploration, puzzles and thought involved. The scrolling printer on the status panel works to good effect giving what could have been a rather dull information screen a bit of life. The second part may prove frustrating as Five has only one life and it's really a matter of gradually learning what happens when – and making sure that you're positioned in the right place. Well, worth checking out. "



► Doing a spot of desk work – Number Five attempts logging onto the Nova Robotics central computer in search of his destiny.

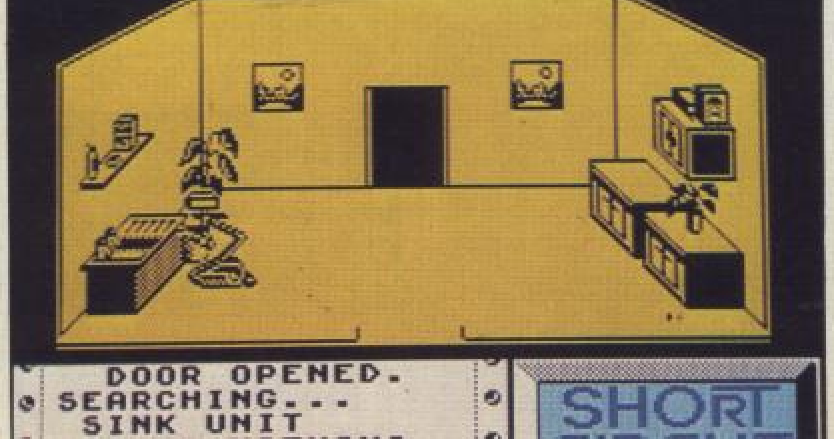
PAUL

" Okay, so the film was quite good for the most part, but this tie-in has captured none of its excitement or cuteness. Number Five moves much too slowly for my liking, and takes far too long to react to joystick movements. The first stage contains some nice scenery, but the general presentation is very hard on the eyes. The second stage is very repetitive, and is no fun at all. Short Circuit *is very boring, and hasn't used the good points to bring it to life. "*

COMMENTS

Control keys: definable
Joystick: Kempston, Interface 2, Cursor
Use of colour: monochromatic on first game, and reasonably colourful on the second
Graphics: good use of perspective, and lively
Sound: funky tune and spot FX, with more tunes on the 128 version
Skill levels: one
Screens: 64
General rating: Takes two popular aspects of Spectrum gaming and presents them both fairly well. Worth a look.

Presentation	71%
Graphics	70%
Playability	70%
Addictive qualities	69%
Value for money	68%
Overall	71%



THRUST II

Producer: Firebird
Retail Price: **£1.99**
Author: **Andrew Rogers**

The ensuing battle between the Federal Resistance (hooray!) and the imperialistic Galactic Empire (boo, hiss!) is still raging. After the successful mission in *Thrust* you have once more been deemed fit to take on a new task; one that takes you to P2112, a planet captured by the Resistance sometime earlier in the war. The planet is atmospherically incomplete but the Resistance desperately it as a base, so your mission is to collect valuable orbs imperative for construction of a purification generator to clear the atmosphere.

As in the original *Thrust* the player controls a small triangular ship which can be manoeuvred either clockwise or anti-clockwise and then thrust in the appropriate direction. The screen scrolls in any direction so your ship generally remains in the centre while the landscape moves around it.

The first orbs are found on the planet's surface and provide manoeuvring practice before penetrating the underground city below. This is a vast underground network of tunnels and open caverns guarded by Imperial androids – colliding with either the walls or the droids automatically deprives the player of one of ten shields. There's a way in which to dispose of the androids – by using a chemical agent stored in boxes inside the planet. However, experimentation is necessary as not every chemical works with every android.

As orbs are removed from their holders and collected they are carried along by a force field, represented by a dotted line suspended from the ship. As the ship thrusts the orb moves with the inertia created. An extra problem is that the orbs all vary in mass so each has a different level of inertia. If the orb is destroyed so is the ship and vice versa. The game finishes when the purification generator has been successfully built.

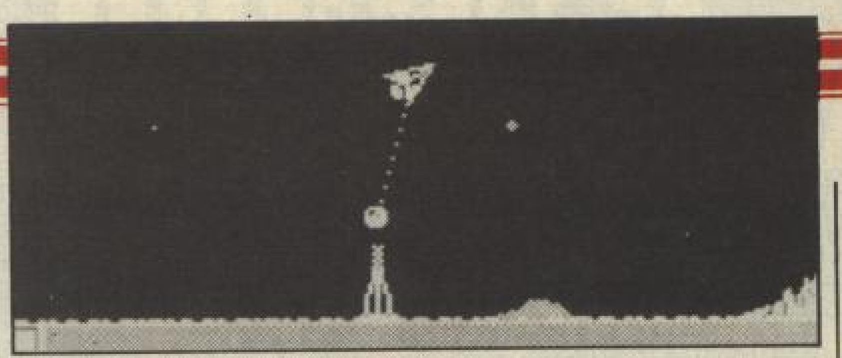
CRITICISM

● **" I didn't think this would be as good as its predecessor, but even so I was expecting a little more in the way of gameplay and content than this. Surely someone could have thought up a more original or exciting plot than this.** Thrust II **would be bearable if the graphics weren't so awful – as it stands though the flickery scrolling is enough to put anyone off playing for more than a few goes at a time. Even for budget software this is below average – not recommended. "**

BEN

● " What a pity that the follow up ended up looking and playing like this. I'm not saying it's a bad game; just that the original Spectrum version did have its problems, and I wouldn't have thought they'd be too difficult to fix on the sequel. Unfortunately, it seems that they've just seen fit to update the scenario and make a few adjustments to gameplay. It still suffers from some of the worst scrolling of any Spectrum arcade game, and the graphics are small and not particularly eye-opening. Not one I'd recommend hastily to *Thrust* fans, though at £1.99 some may well look upon it as good value. "

MIKE



▶ **The orbs to be found on the planet's surface are more for practice than any thing else.**

COMMENTS

Control keys: Q/W left/right, P to thrust, L to pick up orbs, Space to fire
Joystick: none
Use of colour: very limited
Graphics: small and linear with very jerky scrolling
Sound: poor
Skill levels: one
Screens: scrolling (of a sort) play area
General rating: A disappointing also-ran follow-up.

Presentation	64%
Graphics	45%
Playability	49%
Addictive qualities	43%
Value for money	54%
Overall	48%

TRIVIAL PURSUIT
QUESTION PACKS 1&2 . . .
Domark

The best part of a year has passed since we first saw a copy of Trivial Pursuit on the Spectrum. I can imagine that in this length of time many copies have been shelved because the amount of questions were limited, with repetition setting in as more games were played.

Surprisingly, DOMARK have waited until now to release another adult question set, and have followed the makers of the board games quite closely by bringing out a Baby Boomer edition.

The *Baby Boomer* edition is based on 'one of the most exciting periods of our time', well that's what the inlay says, and to be fair it does offer a lot more enjoyment than the high-brow Genus edition. The questions are concerned with three decades; the fifties, sixties and seventies, and their entertainment and events. Aimed generally at the 'baby boomers' (children born during the post-war baby boom) this question pack covers such topics as the Silver Screen, Broadcasting, Publishing, News (or olds even), The life and times of . . . and R.P.M which is the music heading.

Although a little too Yuppie for my liking, I strongly recommend it as a replacement for any worn out Genius I question tapes . . . just who was that last man on the moon again?

The *Young Player* edition has been around since just before Christmas and is basically a simplified Genus edition, great for the seven to eleven year olds, but not much fun for anyone else. The different headings are: Games/Hobbies, People/Places, Good Times, Nature, Science/Technology and (rather surprisingly) Art and Culture. There's a great deal of variation in difficulty between the questions, which might put some of the younger players off. Here are two typical posers as an example: 'How many years are there in a decade?' and 'In which film did a nine year old Tatum O'Neal receive and Oscar for playing a tom-boy?'. This is not as bad as it might have been, as harder problems are more often than not accompanied by a set of multiple choice answers.

Both 'uniload' packs cost £7.95 and consist of about 3,000 questions. The new question sets can only be used in conjunction with the original game, or alternatively an whole new pack can be obtained for £14.95.

So whether you're a baby boomer or a baby boomer's baby, or whether you drive a pram or an XR3i, DOMARK have something to keep you guessing.

by Ben Stone.





AUF WIEDERSEHEN MONTY

Producer: Gremlin
Retail Price: **£7.95**
Author: **Peter Harrap**

The good life is over for Monty the chubby mole. Having escaped from prison to a hideaway in Gibraltar, the villainous burrower from Monty on the Run finds that he's no longer safe from the attentions of Intermole, the international crime fighting organisation.

Monty's only hope of salvation lies on a Greek island, but only if he can acquire sufficient monies to buy it. Before he can do that the rascally digger must pass through Europe, performing at least one task in each of its nations. The continent consists of 80 platform-filled screens. These can be slippery or sticky; disappear beneath the mole's paws; blow him into the air or allow him to go walkabout on their undersides.

Monty moves left and right, and travels upwards by bouncing or using ladders. As he progresses, the scratching scoundrel comes across items to help him to complete the required tasks, these include airline tickets and even the Mona Lisa. Such objects must be picked up (by walking into them) and taken to the right place before they can be of use. Up to four of these articles can be carried at any one time, with these displayed at the bottom left of the screen.

Money is gathered in the form of lost Eurocheques, or earned whenever Monty completes a dodgy bit of business. Points are also scored, and a further six lives acquired, by picking up objects. Mr Mole's account is displayed at the bottom centre of the screen, with the points total to its left.

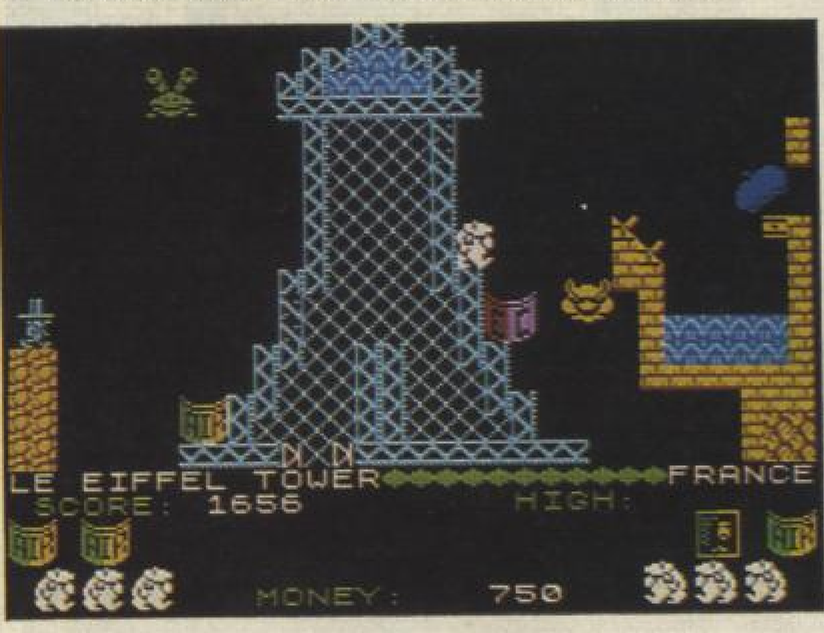
If this excavating escapee is ever to possess his Greek molehill, there are hazards which he must overcome or avoid. Monty isn't a good swimmer, and can drown in water, ball bouncing beasts brain him, flying hamburgers finish him off, and bottles of drink intoxicate him. Initially the mole has six lives, with those remaining displayed at the bottom of the screen.

Air tickets let you into the Air Terminals, from here you can fly to another location and straight into a dog-fight with the Intermole airforce. Clock up the points and broken baddies by shearing off the Intermole tailplanes.

RICKY

" Auf Weidersehen Monty is written in Pete Harrap's usual style, instantly recognisable from the graphics and the infuriating puzzles. As usual, it's a case of learning how to complete each screen in the best way before progressing – it isn't always possible to return to a screen below the present one. A planned route is essential if you're going to get anywhere as just launching into a screen and hoping to do well is rarely effective. I'm quite happy with this, and wouldn't object to paying out the eight quid asking price. "

► **Like any good tourist Monty likes to get to the top of the Eiffel Tower.**



PAUL

" It's been a long time coming, but the latest in the Monty series contains all the attractive points of its predecessors. Monty has had some great moves added to his repertoire – the diving is especially superb. The countries contain distinctive scenic elements (such as the Eiffel Tower), but the screens don't possess any real individual characteristics – for instance there's no Spaniards walking around the place or oranges on the trees in the Spanish section. Auf Wiedersehen Monty is very playable – basically more of the same with a few extra screens. "

Only when every task in the game has been completed, every Eurocheque collected and Monty's Swiss bank account number discovered, can the money be called safe and the island purchased. That done, our hero can toast his future and look out for a gangster's mole.

MIKE

" It's been quite a while since there's been a platform game of this quality bouncing around, so it makes a pleasant change from the continuous flow of arcade adventures and shoot 'em ups that seem to be filling the review pages recently. Some may moan that it's the same as the rest of the series, but I think that it's a good buy; colourful, smooth, attractive graphics, lots of different screens, and an interesting and addictive game design. "

► **Monty Mole is back again, bounding, leaping and flying through Pete Harrap's mean caverns.**

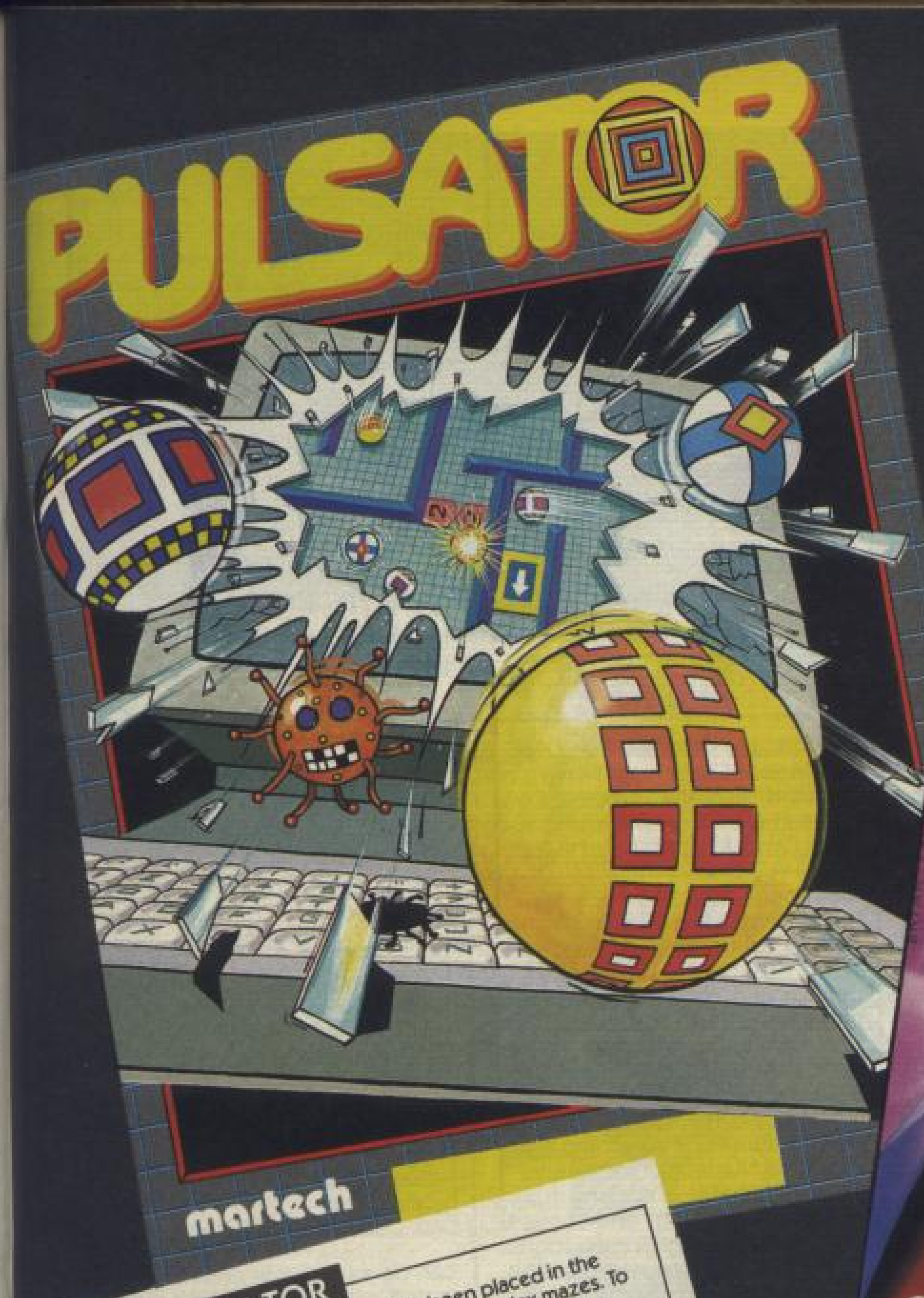


COMMENTS

Control keys: Q left, W right, P up, L down
Joystick: Kempston, Cursor, Interface 2
Use of colour: a multitude of colours with few clashes
Graphics: familiar Monty Mole style
Sound: a happy title tune and adequate spot effects – 128 version contains nice music throughout
Skill levels: one
Screens: eighty
General rating: A fine continuation of the long-standing Monty Mole theme.

Presentation	83%
Graphics	78%
Playability	80%
Addictive qualities	80%
Value for money	77%
Overall	85%

martech....
LIVE THE GAME!





PULSATOR

Your 'pulsator' has no choice. He has been placed in the heart of a series of frighteningly dangerous complex mazes. To escape, he must release the five missing 'Pulsies' each one a captive on a different maze layer.

But he is not alone. A variety of deadly and intelligent enemy pulsators patrol the mazes, each with its own devious way of making life difficult.

Blasting them to pieces will not always be the right thing to do – and anyway, it's easier said than done.

A fast moving and addictive game, requiring quick reactions and quick thinking. Only for those in search of a real challenge!

NEMESIS THE WARLOCK

Can Nemesis the Warlock fight his way through screen after screen of vicious Terminators to find and destroy Torquemada, cruel grand Master of Termight?

Wave upon wave of the evil horde fall before his gun or to crushing blows from his mighty sword Execessus, but still they come. As the battle rages, Torquemada exerts his twisted influence on the scattered corpses of his demented followers and they burst grotesquely into life as deadly scythe-wielding zombies.

Become Nemesis the Warlock, from 2000 AD, and enter this nightmare world – you may never return!!

COSMIC SHOCK ABSORBER

You are Cosmic Shock Absorber, Saviour of the Universe (hopefully!). Time and Space is falling apart (again?).

Cocooned safely in the cockpit of your CZ Neutrozapper fighter (only four repayments left) it is your job to blast your way through the different dimensions of chaos to the source of life itself, the Interstellar Lake of Protozoic Slime. If you make it, the Universe may survive, and most people will pay your bills.

But . . . wait a minute . . . it's worse than that. In the rush to get into the thick of the action – you forgot the 'How to Repair Circuit Boards using the Phasering Iron Manual'.

Oh No – Cosmic Catastrophe!!!! Can Earth possibly survive?

Spectrum Cassette	£7.95	Commodore 64/128 Cassette	£8.95
Amstrad Cassette	£8.95	Disc	£12.95
Disc	£14.95	MSX Cassette (Pulsator & Cosmic Shock Absorber only)	£8.95



TRANSMUTER

Producer: Code Masters
Retail Price: **£1.99**
Author: **Ian Richards**

When the Sun's rays were no longer strong enough to heat the earth, Man burrowed deep beneath the ground, harnessing the heat generated by the planet's core to survive. Each successive generation burrowed deeper and deeper to capture what remained of the diminishing energy force, and as they moved core-wards, deadly weapons were left behind to fend off any alien invaders.

After many years in their subterranean prison, the remains of Mankind finally left their dead planet in search of a new home, leaving the deadly legacy of weaponry in their wake.

However, it was inevitable that Man would eventually return to his old home.

BEN

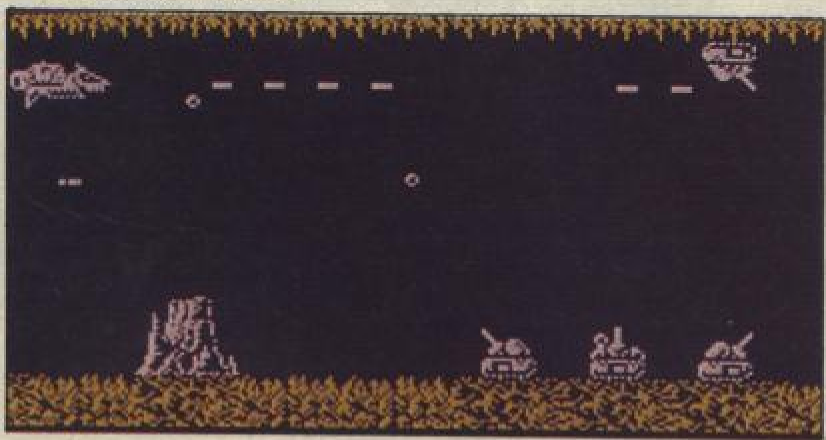
" Transmuter plays quite well (despite its shoddy appearance), and with a little perseverence it proves to be very compelling. The graphics are fair, there's a lot of detail in the cavern scenes and the screen scrolls well, but your craft flickers horribly. The sound is also well above average – in fact, the tune on the title screen doesn't sound like a Spectrum at all "



At times the graphics seem to have returned to those old Penetrator days.

MIKE

" I usually like shoot 'em ups, consequently I enjoyed my first few games of Transmuter – this didn't last long though. The more I progressed, and the more add-ons I collected, the more infuriating it became to lose a life and have to restart. The graphics are fine, but I'm afraid that all that stopping and starting put me off for good. "



Overlord Tenz hurtles through underworld Earth on his mission of reclamation in his super fighter (top left).

Overlord Tenz, one of the first people to be born on the new world colonies, is despatched to destroy the defence systems of underworld Earth and make it safe for mankind's eventual return. Tenz travels to Earth in the most modern of fighting craft, carrying a standard photon cannon. The ship also contains one awesome addition – the Nucleonic Transmuter – a device capable of sucking in surrounding raw energy and converting it into pre-programmed forms.

An energy counter at the bottom left of the screen gives a running total of captured energy units. When a unit has been acquired a Transmute option appears on screen, choose this (using the select key) and the ship is equipped with extra manoeuvring speed. Otherwise, the energy unit can be saved until another is collected and a second transmute option is offered. This adds firepower to the photon cannon, a third equips the ship with missiles, four energy units supply a Laser, five a for a weapons add-on and six for a shield to protect you from enemy fire and collision.

As Tenz moves into the caverns, the dormant defence system kick into life and attack. Tenz can move his craft up, down, backwards and forwards to avoid these (and the equally deadly contact with tunnel walls). One hit is needed to dispense with enemy craft, and several to destroy a ground emplacement.

PAUL

" Why pay more? Announces the loading screen logo. Indeed, why should you when you can get a perfectly good Nemesis-type at a budget price. The only thing that put me off was the lack of pace (even collecting extra speed does little to quicken the proceedings).

COMMENTS

Control keys: defineable: Left, Right, Up, Down, Select, Fire
Joystick: Kempston, Interface 2
Use of colour: black backgrounds and minimal variety elsewhere
Graphics: flickery spaceship, but generally good
Sound: great title tune, average effects
Skill levels: one
Screens: four
General rating: An interesting and fairly priced horizontally scrolling shoot 'em up.

Presentation	71%
Graphics	62%
Playability	67%
Addictive qualities	63%
Value for money	73%
Overall	68%

KRAKOUT

Producer: Gremlin
Retail Price: **£4.99**
Author: **Rob Toone**

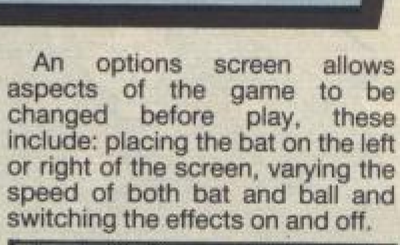
The latest in a long line of Breakout rewrites comes in the form of *Krakout* from GREMLIN GRAPHICS.

An arrangement of blocks fills a three sided screen, with a controllable bat at the open end. A ball is launched into the playing area and ricochets around the screen, destroying the blocks on contact. When the ball approaches the open side, the player keeps it in play by moving the bat up or down into its path. The player starts with a supply of three bats.

Not all blocks explode on first contact – some absorb two or three hits before they disappear, while others spin to reveal a letter. Hitting lettered squares a second time gives the player an advantage, or 'supercharges' the bat.

Animated characters float about the screen, affecting the bat and ball on impact.

An options screen allows aspects of the game to be changed before play, these include: placing the bat on the left or right of the screen, varying the speed of both bat and ball and switching the effects on and off.



CRITICISM

●" This is dead boring, unplayable, and has no lasting appeal. The graphics are all right, the sound isn't too bad (although there could be an in-game tune) and the options on bat and ball speed are a nice touch – but they don't help the overall feel. "

BEN

●" *Krakout*'s graphics are nice and fat, and they move smoothly, but the overall effect is really tedious. The blame oughtn't fall on the programmers; they seem to have done their job well enough, but the unfortunate thing is that the original concept is neither exciting or addictive. It is playable, but only once or twice. "

MIKE

COMMENTS

Control keys: P up, L down, SPACE fire
Joystick: Kempston, Cursor, Interface II
Use of colour: bright and distinctive
Graphics: well defined, if occasionally flickery
Sound: minimal
General rating: A reasonable buy if you like the game-type, but the concept's an old one.

Presentation	65%
Graphics	53%
Playability	50%
Addictive qualities	42%
Value for money	50%
Overall	46%



ULTIMATE
PLAY THE GAME
PRESENT
JETMAN
SEE OUR HERO, JETMAN ... NO YOU DON'T SEE HIM, DO YOU? NO!...THAT'S BECAUSE HE WAS ARRESTED SOON AFTER LANDING ON THE MONSTERS GRAVEYARD PLANET WHERE ALL THE MONSTERS GO TO DIE ... 'TIS SO...
TALKEE-TALK, BOSS?
SURE WE CAN TALK, LI'L PLURPS..
... WHAT YOU WANT TO TALK ABOUT?
IS DIS DA PLACE WO YOU BOSS MONSTA'S COMES TO DIE?
SURE IS...
IS YOU GOIN' GO DEAD?
SURE AIN'T...
'CCORDING TO DIS YO IS....
'CCORDING TO DIS ALL YOU MONSTER GUYS WOT LANDS HERE IS GOIN' GO DEAD!
'CCORDIN' TO THIS... IF YO IS COME HERE JUS' 'TENDIN' TO DIE, DE PENALTY IS DEATH!
YUP!
WHA...?
BA BREF
AT THE VERY SAME MOMENT...
YOU'LL NEVER BEAT THE TRUTH OUTA ME WITH THAT OL' CLUB...
HAH!.. I'LL TELL YOU EVERYTHING BEFORE YOU CAN EVEN RAISE IT!
IT ALL BEGAN WHEN I WUS BORN... AGED ABOUT EIGHT...
OUH!
TOO RIGHT...
IF DERE'S ANY MORE INVADERS LIKE DIS MISERABLE SOD, DEY WILL BORE US ALL TO DEATH! WHAT WE GOIN' DO, TREVOR?
WITH YOU, TREVOR!
ONLY ONE THING WE CAN DO!.. SEND IT BACK WHERE IT CAME FROM...
... THEN WHEN I WUS NINE I FELL AN' CUT MY KNEE...
ABOARD THE SPACE-SHIP...
HO, BOSS...
FUZZ COMIN'...
DEY BRUNG DA LOONY!
YAS
HIM!
I BET IT WUS HIM THAT RATTED ON ME! I BET IT WUS HIM THAT BROUGHT THE FUZZ TO ARREST ME ... WELL... IF I GOIN' TO DIE I GOIN' TO TAKE THAT LOONY-TUNE WITH ME...
... SO I GRABBED AN ELASTOPLAST...
FETCH MAH GUNS!!
AN' SO OUR MONSTER, CONVINCED THAT JETMAN HAS SHOPPED HIM AND THAT HE IS ABOUT TO BE ARRESTED TO FACE CERTAIN EXECUTION, STEPS FORWARD TO GREET JETMAN AND HIS CAPTORS....
KREEGAH KREEGAH KU KU KU KU
BLAM
GOOD LORD, TREVOR! WHO IS THAT?
I DON'T KNOW TERRENCE, BUT HE SURE AS HELL IS IN A MOOD...
I HAD MINCE FOR TEA THAT DAY...
I AIN'T GOIN' MESS WITH HIM!
ME TOO. THAT GUY IS A CHIMP?
WHA..?
MY PAL, THE MONSTER...
I BUSTED A SHOE-LACE TOO...
I IS SAVED!
YO' IS SAVED 'TIL NEKS MUNF, BOY! WO THEN?


HUBBLE BUBBLE &
MARTIANOID TROUBLE
BUBBLER©
Can you cork the bubbler?
Prevent the wicked aliens from escaping the bubbling bottles by collecting corks which you will find when you fall through a trapdoor. The faster you manage to trap the aliens the sooner you can progress onto the next stage..... The game is played on a true 3 dimensional scenario featuring revolutionary smooth, fast multi directional masked scrolling techniques.
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You are the guardian of 'The Brain of Markon', the large and powerful computer installed on the Robot Ship 'The Markon Dawn'. Your Ultimate mission is to defend, maintain and activate the brain following a sudden attack on the ship by the vicious and barbaric Aliens ... THE MARTIANOIDS.
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CREATION IS WITHIN YOUR GRASP!



DESIGN A NEW HERO FOR GREMLIN GRAPHICS AND WIN . . . A SINCLAIR +3

HO HUM, er, um . . .
Poor Ian Stewart at GREMLIN GRAPHICS is in a bit of a tizz. And I know exactly how he feels – this poor comps minion has to do most of the work round here as well. You see, amongst all his other problems (which are probably more suited to LM's **Hassles** column) the dear chap has a game coming out around Christmas time, but it's lacking a hero – someone with the same sort of charisma as Monty Mole, bouncy Thing on a Spring (coming to a Spectrum near you soon – see Previews this month) or Jack The Nipper

So, thought he, wouldn't it give him a chance to put his feet up on that spiffing new executive desk of his, sip a cup of tea, and generally take life just a bit easier if CRASH readers came up with a new superhero to star in the aforementioned game? Yes, it would, Ian.

Not only is there every chance of your invention being put into motion, but GREMLIN GRAPHICS are throwing in a brand new, unused, sparkling and untouched **Sinclair Spectrum + 3** into the bargain (you know, the one with a built-in disk drive, which everyone is still pretending is dead secret – no more tape tangling, no more waiting ages for games to load).

Even if you're not the lucky one, the next ten commendable attempts drawn out out of the hat win themselves a GREMLIN GRAPHICS T-Shirt and their choice of any GREMLIN GRAPHICS game.

What we want are imaginative drawings of a character you must invent, with illustrations on how he (she, it, they) move. And don't forget to show different viewpoints of your character too, so Mr Stewart can see the new superhero's shape and poise from all angles.

Once you've done that, pop your glorious designs (as many pages as you like, but no larger than A4 size please) into a envelope and send it to: **GREMLIN SUPERHERO COMP, CRASH, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1DB** – to arrive no later than 25 May.

Wadda y'waiting for – get scribbling – and while you're doing it, don't forget to scribble down your name and address!

PLEASE NOTE
At time of writing no date has been set for the Spectrum + 3 launch, although it is said to be imminent. As the timing is outside our control, CRASH and GREMLIN GRAPHICS must state that entrants should be prepared to wait for its arrival.



LLOYD MANGRAM'S



FORUM

Sorry about the reduced number of pages this month, but they told me there were too many reviews to fit in, and I'd already eaten up 32 pages with the Playing Tips Supplement, and that was quite enough Mangram for one month. Oh well . . .

There's two related points-of-view debates in this Forum, one concerning IMAGINE's *Arkanoid*, and another on the quality of licensed games. Interesting stuff too. It's from the bunch on licensed games that I've chosen this month's prize winning letter. The £30 worth of software choice goes to Shashy Dass from Hailsham in East Sussex.



ALL TIED UP

ARCADES THE BETTER

Dear Lloyd,
Recently we've seen a burst of licensed games, both from the arcades and the entertainment sector, the cinema, TV, and comics.

Some of these games have turned out to be playable and addictive, some horrendously inept. In my opinion, even if a licensed game is playable, it's usually a disappointment.

I agree that games such as *Scooby Doo*, *Top Gun*, *Rogue Trooper* and *The Lord of The Rings* are fun, but in my opinion they are wasted licenses. This isn't due to poor programming but the cause of hardware limitations.

Scooby Doo (the cartoon) involves some kids rushing about solving mysteries, accompanied by a cowardly and inept dog. They set disastrous traps, using Scooby as bait, and through divine intervention apprehend the wrongdoers. How can anyone hope to capture this on an 8-bit machine, running at 50m/s with no independent graphics or sound chip, while trying to make the game joystick controlled?

Rogue Trooper searches for an army traitor, and the key factor is the interaction between him and his bio-chipped comrades, each of whom have individual personalities. These bio-chips operate in weapons, and can do so independently of Rogue. Again, a very difficult concept to capture with present micro-computer technology.

I agree that certain games such as *Highlander*, *Judge Dredd*, and *Tarzan* are just examples of stock games with the main character as the sprite you control, but my point still stands. I'm not disputing the playability of *Scooby*, *Cobra*, *Top Gun* and so on, but I don't feel the games capture the atmosphere that the main character generates (Scooby acting brave!).

Is it not better for software houses to obtain licenses for arcade games if they lack original ideas of their own? At least the medium in this case is similar, making the conversion easier. There have been many excellent arcade conversions, *Ghost 'n' Goblins*, *Green Beret* and even the conversion of *Space Harrier* and *Gauntlet* were very close.

All I am saying is that software houses should be practical and realise their own, and the machine's, limits. I doubt that even if LEVEL 9 and INFOCOM joined forces they could convert the feeling of Stephen Donaldson's White Gold Wielder books. Maybe if there was a cutback on film, TV, comic licenses, we could see some truly exciting concepts come out of the tired software scene.

Shashy Dass, Hailsham, E Sussex

There's no doubt that a licensed product from what you call the entertainment field can hardly ever hope to capture the atmosphere or feeling of its source, and that such games must remain a marketing exercise. Yes, it's a case of different packaging, often similar game scenario and a redesigned sprite doing much the same things. I think, though, that whatever the source material, it is the games designers who make the real difference, and it's their responsibility to ring the changes and bring fresh perspectives. I wonder whether your view that arcade licences make better Spectrum games than TV/film/comic tie-ins is shared by other readers?
LM



BIG BANG THEORY

Dear Lloyd,
Graeme Kidd's editorial (Issue 38) expressed the truth of what has been happening to the software industry over the last year. It has indeed become like a White Dwarf – a dense source of degenerate matter active only in the very outermost layers. It has not gone there on its own however. The course followed by the software industry was by no means inevitable and need not have led to this.

The blame doesn't lie at the feet of the software producers alone. After all, it's a tough industry and if five bad games are needed to finance one good one, so be-it. In fact the blame lies also at the feet of the promoters of the software industry – the magazines.

Several years ago, at the end of the highly active, independent era, magazines of the time were not slow to sell the 'big bang' idea – that the industry might lose many companies but gain a smaller, more compact core. And although it would produce less products, wondrous games of a higher quality than before would be produced because of the calibre of the companies' in-house programming teams. Now you yearn for small companies and freelance programmers.

Computer magazines actually used to criticise the industry more than they do now. When tie-ins and licensing deals first appeared we never heard the end of it. During this period of deterioration the magazines seemed to grow steadily more silent. Strangely, you all remained over-enthusiastic about the quality of the games you reviewed, seeming to be blinded, by the hype thrust upon you as companies saturated the market with new releases and raked in the profits. Games without originality and polish graphically, or in playability, were give CRASH Smashes without warranting them. Truly it appeared you were being paid by software houses to produce a glowing review.

If you really wish for a return to the innovative, CRASH, do not promote games as being the most incredible thing you've ever seen in your propaganda – sorry, preview section. Most games do not turn out as good as their mock-up screens suggest, and if the game goes on sale before a final review is given you could be supplying software houses with the incentive to rush a game in the interest of a quick profit.

CRASH's influence on software buying must be great. It's heartening to see you've decided to trash the type of game you were giving 60 percent reviews to before Christmas, but ultimately the power to right the industry lies in the hands of the games-buying public. Reader! If you wish to see better games and a future for the software industry, then buy original ideas from companies who try to produce the best software with every release. If you wish to see millions of film tie-ins, a dozen different versions of the same idea, and the eventual demise of Spectrum computing, buy film tie-ins before seeing the review, from the companies who place more importance on the quality of the advert than in the quality of the game.

The Grim Reaper, Penicuik, Midlothian

For my own part, I never recall either crying out for, or promoting the concept of amalgamating smaller independents into larger, but fewer corporations; and I don't think CRASH ever promoted it either.

Previews are intended to give some idea of what's happening soon, not be propaganda, nor be critical, and rarely do comments from CRASH previews get used on packaging. We don't approve of it when it does occasionally happen. Equally, I strongly doubt that a releasing schedule is hurried up at the expense of program quality, just to take advantage of any hype afforded by being previewed in any magazine. It simply doesn't make commercial sense. Otherwise, dear Grim, I support your theories and feelings.

LM

NOTHING NEW UNDER THE SUN

Dear Lloyd,
I write in answer to those who complain about the lack of totally original games.

All the different types of presentation have been used, there have been 2D graphics, both side and above views, vector graphics and 3D graphics. After these there isn't a lot of room for originality. 3D is moaned about the most, but as far as I can see it's the most innovative type of graphic produced so far.

Surely it isn't the type of game (3D flip screens for instance) but the content of the game which counts (unique features and original ideas and concept within the game). Unless anyone has ideas for writing a holographic game which doesn't use a TV screen but floats in mid-air, then these types of game are here to stay for a long while.

So don't moan about original types of game, judge the game by its content and any original features. Give game *type* the respect it deserves and don't write it off as just another game of its type.

Ian Treasure, Helston, Cornwall

I'm sure I've used this analogy before, but most media have to work within structural limitations, and it's said that there are only seven stories to tell, yet novels appeal because of the way in which the author uses the elements at his disposal. Between them, Hammond Innes and Alistair Maclean must have written over 50 thrillers, with invariably similar plots and the same types of character, but they were always best-sellers because each novel managed to engage and surprise. Surely the same is true of computer games? It isn't the medium *(typefaces, words or pixels, sprites) but the* message *(plot, character or scenario, game content) that counts.*

LM

PEN PALS

R J Smith *from Worcester, tells me that in their spare time he and some friends have set up a co-operative for Spectrum users. Its main task is to try and find pen pals for other avid Spectrum owners. Anyone who joins the co-op will be entered on their club files, and by return of post receive a personal member number. They then try to match you up with other members on file, and each 'pal' is sent the other's address and interests. After that it's up to you. Oh, and they want girls to write in too! As they have no source of income, please send details with a stamped addressed envelope for the return advice. The address to write to is* **Progenius Inc, 49 Lydes Road, Great Malvern, Worcester WR14 2BY**

Meanwhile Ian Blundell *(13) from 13 Lonsdale Drive, Craston, Nr Preston, Lancs PR5 7SB, would like to hear from anyone who wants to exchange letters with him.*

LM


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NEW CRASH LOOK

Dear Mr Mangram,
I was just sitting at my computer desk in a fit of boredom and gazed upon the Land of Mandragore poster which I received free with CRASH one month. And my attention was brought to bear on the three logos at the top. One for CRASH, another ZZAP! and one for AMTIX! – that Amstrad thingy.

Anyway, I studied the ZZAP! 64 logo and thought, 'Wow! Amazing 3D perspective!' I looked at the Amstrad-logo-thingy and thought, 'Wow! Excellent shading!' Then I looked upon the CRASH one and thought, 'Hmmmmm . . . yes, I like the nice, boring 2D representation of a few letters and sparks.' (A heavy tint of sarcasm there). Just face up to it Lloyd, the CRASH logo is unimaginative, out of date and pretty crappy in all other respects.

I think it's about time CRASH's logo had a face-lift (maybe a good idea for a comp), so get those scumballs in the art department drawing. Make it exciting, professional and get rid of those stupid little sparks which cheapen the overall effect and make it look amateurish.

I know that if this letter is printed I'll probably get a load of hate mail from people saying that it's fine as it is, but I will stand by my opinions.

Don Elliot, Beaworthy, N W Devon

Okay Don, let's see what the readership thinks! I'm very attached to the logo. Sure it's not very sophisticated, but it was designed purposefully to be bright, sharp and slightly crude in effect. Try standing in a crowded newsagent, twenty feet from the the magazine stand, and see which computer mag's title stands out the most!
LM

LAID BACK

Dear Lloyd,
Very rarely do I find something to moan about in CRASH but one thing continues to bug me; **CRASH Back** which features every three issues or so, is an excellent idea. However, why do the reviewers (or re-reviewers) have to drop the rating percentages?

I'm sure you'll agree that after two or so years on the market, there aren't many programs which match up to most of today's high standard. Therefore it's unfair to say that the graphics on *Boulder-dash*, for example, should be knocked down by a certain percentage. When these games were launched they were all somewhat special in some way, so why judge old games by present products?

David Griffin (15), Bromsgrove, Worcs

The original concept behind CRASH Back was to see how the games we remembered as being great had fared over the passage of time, and re-rate them by today's standards. It isn't supposed to run them down, but just to place them in context, and those of today.
LM

OLD POKES FOR NEW

Dear Lloyd,
I read Paul Harrison's letter in the last issue, and I'm totally in agreement. Many Spectrum owners bought their Spectrums second hand (as I did) and got a load of games – old ones – thrown in free.

Of course, being previously non-Spectrum owners they would also have been non-CRASH readers, so they've all got all these ancient, mega-difficult games and have no tips or POKEs for them. So the games get thrown onto a shelf to gather dust.

So, in comes my amazing idea. Print all your old POKEs, maps and tips in an annual devoted solely to 'cheating' and charge a quid for it. That way, you please all the relatively recent Speccy owners, and you get extra cash for your monthly booze up with the Spiky Haired ones!!

Daniel Heap, Maidstone, Kent

It's certainly an idea, and one I've seen mentioned in several Forum letters recently. Perhaps the extra Playing Tips Supplement this issue will go some way to answering your prayers. Daniel
LM

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO?

Dear Lloyd,
One of my favourite sections of CRASH has disappeared! The section I refer to is **Merely Mangram**, written by your illustrious self. It used to be such an interesting read, telling us all about new games coming out. I know that CRASH has Preview pages, and these are very colourful, but not so many games are covered as in Merely Mangram.

As the Questionnaires have shown in the past, Merely Mangram was very popular and always came high in the voting. I know that you're pushed for time Lloyd, because of **LM**, so someone else could do it, like one of the reviewers. Just think you could call it Merely Mike or Previewer Paul or something!

Has the Comps Minion got a name? Can we see a picture of him?

What has happened to Oli Frey? His drawings are not as impressive as they used to be.

Axe Hall of Slime and print the scores as in ZZAP! You could still print photos of High Scorers for certain games, even including the score if you feel it's needed.

Steve, Halesworth, Suffolk

As you can see from this issue, Steve, Merely Mangram has returned! As for the Comps Minion, don't you know that minions don't have names? Oli Frey's illustrations seem as good as ever to me, but of course he is kept pretty busy between three magazines. The Hall of Slime is being rethought, and takes a holiday this issue after three years of hard work. Discussions take place even as I write about how it will be brought back.
LM

ADVENTURE PREVIEWS

Dear Lloyd,
Over the four years I have owned a Spectrum I've collected quite a number of adventure games. But why oh why can you count on one hand the number of adventure games previewed in CRASH?

Please, please, tell Derek Brewster to get his finger out and give us a few adventure reports.

Another point: In the April edition of CRASH you said that the average age of readers was 14-15 (David Shotbolt's letter). I am only 12 and know quite a lot of Spectrum owners who are the same age as me, and every month buy CRASH. So please tell me why you say 14-15?

Richard Bailey, Newton-le-Willows

Your plea will soon reach Derek's eyes when he gets his copy. Actually the average CRASH reader's age, as defined by last year's Questionnaire, is 17.5. But the biggest single age group in the readership is 14-15. That's the way it is (or was), and that's why I said it.
LM



A

CONSOLING FACT

Dear Lloyd,
Referring to Mr Bailey's letter of the month I feel I ought to underline a few more reasons why games consoles will not, in my view, succeed.

Whilst game consoles have superior graphics and sound than most micros, the Atari STs and Amigas demonstrate what the less expensive computers will be like in the next year or two. If you saw last *Micro-Live*, then the prototype Acorn RISC Machine (ARM) with its fast processing, graphics with 256 colours and Amiga-quality sound, will probably look like the most exciting and affordable prospect on the horizon. However, as a confirmed Acorn user (I own a Spectrum too) I can almost guarantee that Acorn will fail the ARM on price – but there are always hopes! This bring me conveniently to my first point, that games consoles will probably be superceded within a year of their release, in areas of graphics, sound and programming.

If you have read any profiles on computer programmers then there is usually the obligatory paragraph on their exploits with ZX-80s and 16K RAM-packs, VIC 20s, 16K Spectrums and other early micros. With games consoles, new programmers will become a rarity, because no one can possibly start computing programming in X80 machine code or assembler. New programmers will always start with programming in BASIC and then slowly progress by using other people's routines to eventually become competent programmers.

Most programmers then settle with a certain computer for a few years before moving on to more powerful machines, the Atari ST, for example. Console upgrades are unheard of and attempts at making them have been unsuccessful, note the Coleco ADAM machine whose price dropped $100 every month!

So no matter how brilliant console manufacturers make their machines, the market will always catch up with them, improve on them and soon leave them redundant.
F Sasson, London N2

You're quite right. What is the current fad for releasing new games consoles all about anyway. They had their day years ago. Unless, of course, it's seen as a way of bringing out all those old cartridges once again (for about £35 apiece), and recouping their losses.
LM

ON BECOMING A PUBLISHER

Dear Lloyd,
Concerning the letter in Issue 39 from the Hopeful Editors of a Magazine; I was particularly interested since myself and a few friends decided to start a fanzine just after Christmas. Although our publication, *Fantasy Unlimited*, is not primarily a Speccy mag, it does contain some relevant Spectrum computer articles as I'm the only one in our group remotely into computers.

I was curious as to how these Hopeful Editors came to the decision to want to create a mag. *Fantasy Unlimited*'s first issue came out at the end of February and even then we were very lucky to get it printed at all.

First of all, make sure you actually want to start a mag, then ask around for photocopying facilities, asking some business people if you can use their copiers. This is the first major hurdle, getting the mag printed, and at a low price. I won't go into all the details, but if you're determined and you have money to spare, then nothing's to stop you. Don't let the production of the magazine become a drag,





'LITE UP MY LIFE

Dear Lloyd,
After reading about the *Elite*less 128 owner, I decided to write in praise of FIREBIRD's service. Discovering that *Elite* wouldn't load (even with joystick interface removed), I rang FIREBIRD and asked advice. They told me to send just the tape and they would send back the new version when it was ready (Date Feb 86, 128 version of *Elite* expected May 86). Two weeks after sending the tape, I received a letter stating that the new tapes would be ready in June at the earliest, *four month wait!* My little brother (rated Dangerous) suffered severe withdrawal symptoms until I borrowed an old rubber key for him to use with a back up copy.

June arrived and with it, a parcel. I eagerly loaded the new program to find that it *was* different. (In fact, so different that none of my brother's saved positions loaded, and he became Harmless overnight. He is now Deadly and it took him about three weeks, while I spent two months becoming Competent (and rich).

All I can suggest to the *Elite*less one is that his parcel, containing all the proof that he ever owned a genuine copy of the 48K version is lost. Unless he tries to get some cash out of our postal service, he's going to stay at least 16 quid out of pocket.

Andrew Taylor, Calcot, Reading

It's nice to know that for every sad tale there's a silver lining.
LM

you must enjoy it, or there's no point.

Last, the library should be helpful in supplying you with info. Ask for books about Graphic Design, they will contain all you need to know . . .

I hope this letter has been of some use to prospective fanzine starters, but don't let all the hassle put you off, you might get lucky as we did.

Sean Doran, Belfast

PS *Fantasy Unlimited* is a mixture of all the major mags around at the moment it's a sort of *2000 AD* meets *White Dwarf* meets CRASH meets **LM**! Any chance of a plug?

Sean Doran, Belfast

PS *Fantasy Unlimited* is a mixture of all the major mags around at the moment it's a sort of *2000 AD* meets *White Dwarf* meets CRASH meets **LM**! Any chance of a plug?

Thanks for the practical information, Sean. I should say that dedication and enthusiasm are essential to a fanzine. Having fun doing it is vital, otherwise it just becomes a drag. As to a plug: anyone who would like to know more should get in touch with Sean at 14 Velshada Court, Belfast BT14 7LZ.

By the way Sean, thank you for the Bug Box cartoon strip as well.
LM



UN-BUGGED

Dear CRASH,
After seeing your article on us in your March issue, the Editorial Team of *The Bug* thought that a few points should be corrected.

First, amd probably the biggest mistake, was your reference to *The Bug* being run primarily by Jeffrey Davy with considerable help from the others. There are four of us in the Editorial Team (Five if you include myself, Percy!) and all in the Editorial Team contribute the same, and are completely equal.

Right, with that over I would also like to point out that we have a fantastic Adventure Helpline and not a Strategy one as you indicated, and that all cheques (40p + p&p) should be made payable to Jaron Lewis as we can't cash cheques payable to *The Bug*.

Bye for now

Percy The Potato, The Bug Magazine, 28 Leaside Avenue, Moswell Hill, London, N10 3BU

Crikey Editorial Team! Sorry we got that wrong! I just know that Editorial Team (CRASH branch members) would be infuriated if anyone so much as suggested a whisper of inequality – sexual or otherwise. Oddly enough, I can't cash cheques made out to CRASH either. Life's just not fair.
LM



ARK ANNOYED

Dear Lloyd,
I wish to complain about the review of IMAGINE's *Arkanoid* (Issue 39). Disregarding points about addictivity, which seem strange to me (why should gameplay be 'disturbingly' compelling?), I would like to comment on the question of originality and open up this general question.

Says **Magnus Ramage** *from Milngavie in Glasgow, kicking off on a subject that has certainly caused a storm of protest – our* Arkanoid *review.*

This letter is aimed at that trio of poor misguided games reviewers Mike, Paul and Ben, and concerns their less than pleasing review of *Arkanoid* by Imagine . . .

Hurls the pen of **Tony Worrall**, *who just happens to be Editor of EPROM in Preston, Lancashire, while from Salford* **G Hamnett** *wonders . . .*

Could this be the same game I have been playing for the last three weeks? I was amazed to see the pounding it took from your reviewers. In fact, the question has to be asked – was it *Arkanoid* they were reviewing?

Where to start? Perhaps with **Magnus Ramage**, *who feels that . . .*

. . . to call *Arkanoid* unoriginal is rubbish as the additions to *Breakout* are enormous, such as the power pills, aliens and 32 new screens.

But of course, as **Tony Worrall** *points out,* Arkanoid *is not original in the sense that it's licensed from the arcade machine.*

I was well pleased when I saw the Spectrum version. Very little of the coin-op had been changed, apart from the graphics (which is not all that surprising) – all the gameplay was still in place. And if you forget all that petty and boring 'Oh yes, very original, just like Breakout, another Pong variation, etc,' and just play the game for what it is and not what it's like, I can't see how anyone can fail to be hooked.

And **G Hamnett** *agrees thoroughly . . .*

Arkanoid is a well programmed nicely packaged and, surprisingly, highly addictive piece of software that plays, looks and sounds as good as can be expected on the Spectrum. *Sinclair User* probably went over the top bestowing classic status on the game, but it certainly deserved its five star rating.

For those who admire it, its addictive qualities seem unarguable. **Tony** *again . . .*

I played *Arkanoid* for four solid hours when I first loaded it, and have played it almost every day since, trying to get passed level 13). Quite simply, I consider it to be one of the most addictive out of my collection of over 350 Spectrum games.

So how come Ben, Paul and Mike got it so wrong? Putting aside the suggestion that they were reviewing a different game (they weren't!), **G Hamnett** *thinks he knows why . . .*

it was obvious from your reviewers comments (particularly Paul's) that they weren't prepared to enjoy the game even before they had played it, probably due to the ancient concept behind it.

Whereas **Tony Worrall** *puts it down to being 'opinionated' without sufficient background to be so. In fact at one point in the review he . . .*

. . . laughed out loud when I saw Paul's comment about HORIZON's *Thru The Wall* game. If he's serious I feel very sorry for him, because he has either obviously not played *Arkanoid*, or he has no game playing sense of adventure. If he *is* joking, it's not funny at all. If anyone playing *Arkanoid* past level four tells me they find it dull unexciting, unimaginative, I will show you a very boring person.

Strong stuff indeed, Tony, but you're not quite finished with them yet, I hear . . .

The terrible trio came across as cynical hacks bored to death by reviewing X amount of games each issue.

Well it's true that you can become tired when there's 20 or 30 so games to wade through in a month, but the games aren't reviewed in a complete vacuum; more than the three commentators views are heard during the reviewing period, and in Arkanoid*'s case, there seemed to be general agreement. However, onto another aspect.* **Tony** *is upset by the 'jibes about poor programming', and echoes G Hamnett's feelings about its qualities when he says . . .*

. . . simply isn't true. Sometimes the ball does pass through the very end of the bat, but I don't see that as a bug. Just don't hit the ball that way! The comments about speed variations I find just as strange. The ball gets faster after 20 or so shots, and if not slowed down by catching a capsule, gets so fast that losing a life is almost inevitable. This is part of the game, just as it was with the coin-op version. The speed of the bat across the screen is, I suspect, to aid the player in reaching the ball quicker (much like the EXTRA ZIP in *Thru The Wall!*).

The programmers do appear to have kept closely to the coin-op's original qualities of gameplay, but back to **Magnus Ramage** *and his argument about the Spectrum version's originality . . .*

I would suggest that all arcade games are based on one of four formats: shoot 'em ups, platform games, maze games and bat and ball games. And there isn't an arcade game that doesn't fall into one or more of these categories, whatever extra features are added to it (eg Knightlore, and the many games it has spawned, such as as last month's smash *Head Over Heels*, is merely a platform game with fancy graphics and some adventure elements).

Therefore, *Arkanoid* cannot be described as unoriginal; in fact it is very original, as there haven't been many bat and ball games for the Spectrum recently.

The mention Magnus makes of Head Over Heels *calls into question the 'bias' that* **G Hamnett** *feels is at work among the three CRASH reviewers of* Arkanoid. *He too was . . .*

. . . a bit taken aback to see that *Batman II* sorry, *Head Over Heels* received an identical rating (97 percent) to that of the superlative, CRASHiest Smash of them all *Dun Darach*! Why? Apart from the fact that you control two characters, sometimes together, the game is almost a complete replica of *Batman*. The puzzling thing is, is that your reviewers slag off *Arkanoid* because of its old game concept, but cannot bring themselves to give the same treatment to *Head Over Heels* which employs an admittedly younger but infinitely more used game concept.

Since the advent of the Spectrum, compare the number of *Breakout* clones to the amount of *Knightlore* clones that have sprung up left, right and within six months after the release of that classic game. So, reviewers, in future don't judge a game by its cover.

A very sound piece of advice, Mr Hamnett, but ironically, one you don't quite subscribe to yourself . . . !

Finally I would like to re-iterate J M McDonald's views in Issue 39. A game with HEWSON on the front is indeed the sign of a quality game, and, unlike ULTIMATE, the same can be said of the company's C64 releases. HEWSON and GARGOYLE are, sadly, the only two software companies whose names are actually marks of quality.

As you said, don't judge a game by the quality sign on its cover!
LM

Okay, my somewhat reduced space this month has now expired. Thank you for writing in, and please keep doing so, otherwise Derek Brewster will be overtaking me, and we can't have that now, can we Derek? I'd be really interested to put together a massive 'debate' points-of-view style piece on a subject touched upon in this Forum – that of what makes games addictive, playable and good value. Get the letters going, I'll pile them up and then compile something in an issue or two's time. Address? The usual: LLOYD MANGRAM, FORUM, CRASH, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1DB.

No1

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Part Six

By Mel Croucher

La dee do dah dah dah . . . and I must face the final curtain . . . te tum te la la la de dooby doo of which I'm certain. How are we doing? 140,255 hours 59 minutes to go including leap years . . . dah dah do dah dah dah de dum de each and every highway . . . dum dum much more than this, I did it . . . um, maybe I can hurry things along for you. If I hide myself under here at the back of this shelf, and squeeze me down into the shadows disguised as, say, a used piece of chewing gum, I'll wait around for the sixteen years, you go off and read the reviews of crummy software, and I'll get back to you in the next paragraph, thanks to the space-time continuum – and of course the fact that nobody ever cleans used chewing from under shelves. Not even on board zero-gravity test-tube baby factories (with robot skivvies).

. . . more than I could chew . . . but dah dah dah dum de de de I did it my . . . oh hello again. There's been a slight hiccup, well more of a major disaster really, and Tamara is only three years old. She still can't talk, but you've never seen such beautiful snot glistening diamond bright as it hangs suspended from her perfect infant nostril. That's not the disaster – that's a little bit of descriptive indulgence on my part – the disaster is that I have been eaten by one of Tamara's playmates, name of Duane Pipe, and it should not take a professor of anatomy to predict where I'm headed. It looks as though I'm in it up to my neck this time. Not that miniaturised neutron bombs disguised as used chewing gum have necks. You see, it's potty time!

Here at the baby factory things are highly scheduled. Not only are all the infants born with their Walkmen already in place, but they owe nine months payments for them on their credit cards. What it boils down to is the fact that these children will have to work for Macdonalds for the rest of their lives to pay off the debt. They charge the kids for potty training too. Sweet wee tots, sitting in orderly ranks, eyes mesmerised by video screens which are showing some ancient laxative called 'Surprise! Surprise!' It works every time. Some weird humanoid trots into view disguised as a middle-aged haddock and gargles into a telephone at 12Khz/220dB. Spontaneous bowel movement is assured for anyone within range.

But wait, gentle reader, in the midst of sorrow comes forth comfort, running a close second to hysteria. Let me savour this moment for a moment. What joy, what bliss. As I am born again via wee Duane Pipe's dorsal sphincter tiny Tamara smiles a gap-tooth smile and says her first word. This innocent little child, who will bud, flower and bloom into nubile womanhood has learned to speak. "Pooh!" she says. Well, what did you expect? You try crapping in zero gravity.

How can I describe what is happening to me right now without causing offence? A cleansing robot is wiping my expression off his faeces. It's in all the papers. I'm all washed up. Ex-stinked. Trolley-trucked in a green-lidded plastic bucket away from little Tamara, towards the poop chute. Destination deep space. But there is no need to panic. Surely a sentient bomb endowed with my massive intellect can think himself out of this sticky little mess. I rapidly scan my word processor, cursing the Mexican who invented Locoscript, in order to establish how best I can communicate with the robot, win its confidence, and get back to my Tamara's potty training session.

"Your Public school computers are full of cr . . . "

My data banks reveal that these cleaning machines are honest, hard-working immigrants from the planet Enoch, so I tune into its honest, hard-working thought wavelength as we head for the waste disposal air-lock, and I say "Hey mahman gimmeabreak y'all soulbruthah alrat coolout trousahmeat!" The electro-mechanical Mr Mopp infra-reds the garbage skip to the loo, extends a manual dexterity unit towards my bucket, flips its lid, focuses a scanner on the gently steaming contents and replies to my message thus:

"You public school computers are full of . . . cr . . . a . . . " the terminal fricative is lost as the air-lock irises shut. I am not believing this! Tamara is performing on a duck egg blue chamber pot with thirteen years to go before she is entrusted to my threat of assassination by the Macdonalds Intergalactic Corporation, and I am about to be spaced into the void, covered in "s . . . s . . . stupidity."

Extra mental activity is required hereabouts. There is a sound like a million Duane Pipes voiding bowels as the external iris opens, and yours truly is expelled at 32 feet per second in the company of a load of juvenile bodily waste, a half eaten word, the collected words of Instant Sunshine, overdrawn sperm banks, three score and ten pieces of ancient used chewing gum, a suicide note from a sharp minor, the most disgusting thing you can possibly imagine and a plastic teether in the shape of Tony Heatherington. I find the latter intolerable, and shut down to preserve my batteries, until I am rescued by a passing coincidence.

. . . I ate it up and spat it out . . . de dah but dah dah dah . . . I did it lah way . . . my internal clock assures me that nine years have passed, but time flies when you're zipping clockwise. I have been so insufferably bored out here. Spinning through space, trying to sing Sid Vicious parodies, with suffocating waves of Richard Strauss symphonies bouncing off black monoliths indestructible as a Mandela, foetal planets tipping me the wink, Hal on Earth, and nothing on the telly except MTV, GCHQ, HRH and my mind's eye fantasies concerning Tamara's progress. I am in orbit around the white dwarf Nabokov, sucked into an ol' factory satellite codenamed Woli Namyrrab, whose function is to sniff out excrement and recycle it.

What a weird looking construction it is! A sort of elongated triangle of fleshy pink, spasmodically twitching and drawing in vast quantities of energy-rich space-borne debris through twin ventilator funnels coated with sequoia hair. Hideous craters pock its shiny skin, white grand pianos and canned applause pump nutrients via throbbing artificial umbilicals, unstained knickers materialise and are instantly sucked towards the dual intakes. I don't like it here. Forgive us further for wee nose, not what we do.

Woli Namyrrab sucks me in, and immediately breaks. Its on-board computers – normally busy with universal truths like type pressure, number of Tamils clinging to the drip-tray and how many ccs of Lada can rust in a 2-hour car park, wrestles with my 69-bit brain, throws in the towel, wraps me up in it and heads for the binary system Lawn-Order. Gimme another break.

Mistakes I've dah de dah . . . but then again too few to mention . . . dah dee dah diddle dee . . . Hello again, especially Stephen Graham and Mike Reed, you're too kind. I have been orbiting Nabokov wrapped in this towel for several years. Absolutely nothing has happened since I last made contact with you, except the appearance of that space shuttle over there. I wonder how Tamara is getting on. She is about fifteen or sixteen by now, sporting pigtails and white socks, which is the only school uniform worn in a Macdonalds rig. She must have left potty training years ago, and been shipped off to one of their higher education centres where they graduate in lipstick application, unarmed combat, shoelace tying, that sort of thing. It shouldn't take me long to track her down. After all it's just the one known universe where Macdonalds operate. I've lived a life that's full . . . dum dum de dee do diddle dah . . . I'll say it loud not in a shy way . . . tah tah much more than this I did it my w . . .

The shuttle heaves to. Not a pretty sight. A little bald guy in a pinstripe spacesuit is popping out of the airlock and shoving a 'breach of copyright' writ at me from some singer-songwriter named Paul Anka. Funny how some people live up to their surnames. I am delighted to report that he thinks it is the towel who has been singing 'My Way' for all these years, and fails to notice the encrusted chewing gum now attached to his velcro-soled foot. OK folks, I'm on my way to find Tamara! Just hang about while he boards the shuttle, wriggles out of this spacesuit and changes into something more comfy (hmmm . . . nice suspenders) and I'll hack into the shuttles' navigation computers. It should be a piece of cake to make contact with a Macdonalds data bank from here, and find out where my little frosted grape has been plucked.

"Table-decoration? what kind of career is that!"

Here we go then, separate the whites from the yolks for the royal icing and gently beat in the flour



until the mixture is the consistency of a – hello? hello? are you receiving me? – melt the chocolate over a gentle heat but do not boil and – hello? LOUSE to anything. Come in please – add a pinch of nutmeg, a pinch of cinamon and a pinch of salt then – hello? hello? who's that? aah, contact! Right! Let's get hacking. Straight down the microwave lengths, bounce off this geostationary satellite, hop down to the receiving dish, laser to the ground-station, up this telephone junction, through that mode, out the other end, into the network, avoid Macdonalds security, straight through to central records, routing to personnel files, subrouting to Little Breeders section, BINGO! flip through the index, A,B,C,D . . . dah dah were times, I'm sure you knew, when I bit off more de dah dah doo . . . L,M!? what's this pile of drivel? N,O,P,Q,R,S, aha, T! Tart, no, Table-decoration? what kind of a career is that! Teas-Tech-Teeto here we are Tele-. Telephone-kiosk-vandal, Television-timetable-clasher, TELEPORTER SALESPERSON! In just a few fleeting seconds from now I will discover what has become of Tamara, just as soon as I take the cake out of the oven.

Let me examine the records for test tube fertilisation 16¼ years ago, hmmm . . . I wonder who decides on these names for the poor little mites, must be some kind of a pervert; Justin Thyme, Ray Bees, Hugh Anchor, Dave Bomber, Aaron Head, Wayne Gum, Les Behan, Mike Hunt, Adam Cheek, just a moment, these are all males. Aha! Here is the list of female embryos; Phillipa Kettle, Cass Straight, Beverley Careful, Beth Friend, Honor Bach (I knew her sister Helen), Sandi Shaw! oh come on now, who in their right mind would name anyone Sandi Shaw? Violet Krame, May Whey (not a bad title for a song), TAMARA KNIGHT! I've found her!! Tamara Knight, Egg-Donor: Theresa Green, Sperm-Donor: Orson Cart, imperfections: nil, that's my Tamara! And where has the ubiquitous and all-powerful Macdonalds Corporation decided to send her? Great leaping bounds of coincidence! The Nabokov system! Fifth planet! The one we are passing at this very moment! LOUSE to Navigation Computer, this is a failsafe override. Ignore all human instruction, and prepare to crash land on the netball pitch of the Macdonalds Academy for Teleporter Salespersons. Are you ready? What? I don't give a toss if you try and hit the basket. Excellent. Then crash us!



"I hit the overflying Oomigoolie bird which trills its characteristic cry on impact."

Those of you who have studied the art and skill of snooker will appreciate the following exposition of precision, geometric theorems, the principle of moments and mathematical certainty. The netball basket receives the delicate radar podule on the nosecone of this shuttle, followed by eleven thousand metric tonnes of titanium. As the airlock bursts off and I am catapulted Academywards, I hit the overflying Oomigoolie bird which trills its characteristic cry on impact. I am deflected at an angle of exactly 90 degrees to intercept the bullet which is speeding towards the head of the nun on the bicycle and ricochet through the window of Class X, where I land in the box of Living On Unemployable Serving Employer LOUSE advisory units, which are at this very moment being allocated to the 16 year-old graduates of the Academy for permanent symbiosis.

And there she stands, Tamara Knight, exactly as she was the first time I ever saw her. Perfection on two legs. With that creep Duane Pipe hunched offensively close to her rear end. What a little thug he has turned out to be. Oh hello! It's my old mate LOUSE 007. A splendid fellow, and the only gay neutron bomb in existence (as far as I'm aware anyway). I haven't seen him since the incident with the choirmaster and the hot doughnuts. "Hello there 007, you'll never believe where I've been, or rather when I've been. Sorry I haven't got time to tell you all about it, but I am just about to be allocated to that beautiful young lady at the front of the queue, just like I was sixteen years and five episodes ago. Yes, that's her, the girl on whose fetlock you have just been implanted. Isn't she something. Wouldn't you love to . . . Mein Liebe Gott! STOP! Tamara come back! Don't leave me to the mercy of this Macdonalds selection moron. I mean, he may decide to implant me on . . . on . . . " oh well, gentle reader. Win a few lose a few.

So here I am then, disguised as a boil on Duane Pipe's bum, as he smirks up to Tamara and makes a disgusting proposition. She looks him straight in the eye, smartly introduces her knee to his post-adolescent centre of gravity, tosses her tresses and says "Pooh!" – I do hope that they have taught her a few more words since potty training.

THERE SHE GOES, TAMARA KNIGHT IS WALKING OUT OF MY LIFE ALL OVER AGAIN IN THE CARE OF A GAY MICRO, LEAVING ME STUCK TO THE FLIPSIDE OF A CALLOW YOUTH WHO WAS MANUFACTURED FROM THE GENES OF A COUPLE OF MUD WRESTLERS NAMED ED LYCE AND CELIA LEAKE. I GUESS THERE IS ONLY ONE THING TO DO. WHAT DO YOU RECKON, DEAR READER? SHALL WE? COME ON THEN, ALL TOGETHER, LOUD AND CLEAR (AND 24 TO PAUL ANKA!) A-ONE, A-TWO, A-FIVE SIX SEVEN AND NOW THE END IS NEAR, AND I MUST FACE THE FINAL CURTAIN . . .

TO BE CONTINUED



MAKE WAY FOR THE PROFESSIONAL

There's one review this month which stands proud of all the rest. It's not that the games received this month are any better or worse than normal, it's just that this release will have a bigger impact on the adventure scene than all of the rest put together. The program I refer to is *The Professional Adventure Writer*, or *PAW*, the familiar name by which it is already known. It may not have as interesting a name as the imaginatively titled *Quill*, the GILSOFT utility released three years ago, but it is an apt title nonetheless. The program is truly professional, as anyone who has ever attempted to write an adventure will realise the moment they delve into the manuals.

At first sight, £22.95 may seem a lot to ask for any Spectrum software, but the program benefits from the skills which **Tim Gilberts**' team acquired while devising *The Quill*, *The Patch*, and *The Illustrator*.

This month's games list consists of two full-priced products and two cheapies. Those near the tenner mark are *Grange Hill* from ARGUS PRESS SOFTWARE, an exciting adventure featuring the after-hours antics of the Eastenders acting school, and *The Sidney Affair*, a more Anglicised name after *L'Affaire Vera Cruz* from the Gallic software house INFOGRAMES – the new game is in every way a *Vera Cruz II*. At the cheap and cheerful end are *Matt Lucas*, a PLAYERS product (PLAYERS are an INTERCEPTOR MICROS offshoot) and the mysteriously named *Kobyashi Naru*, not in fact an African wildlife reserve, but an icon-driven good-looker from the chaps who just kept awake long enough to see off *ZZZZ*. Although *Kobyashi Naru* may have some failings, it does introduce an interesting innovation, that of finding the noun to link up with the icon-selected verb by searching through the text description – a new idea which works very well.

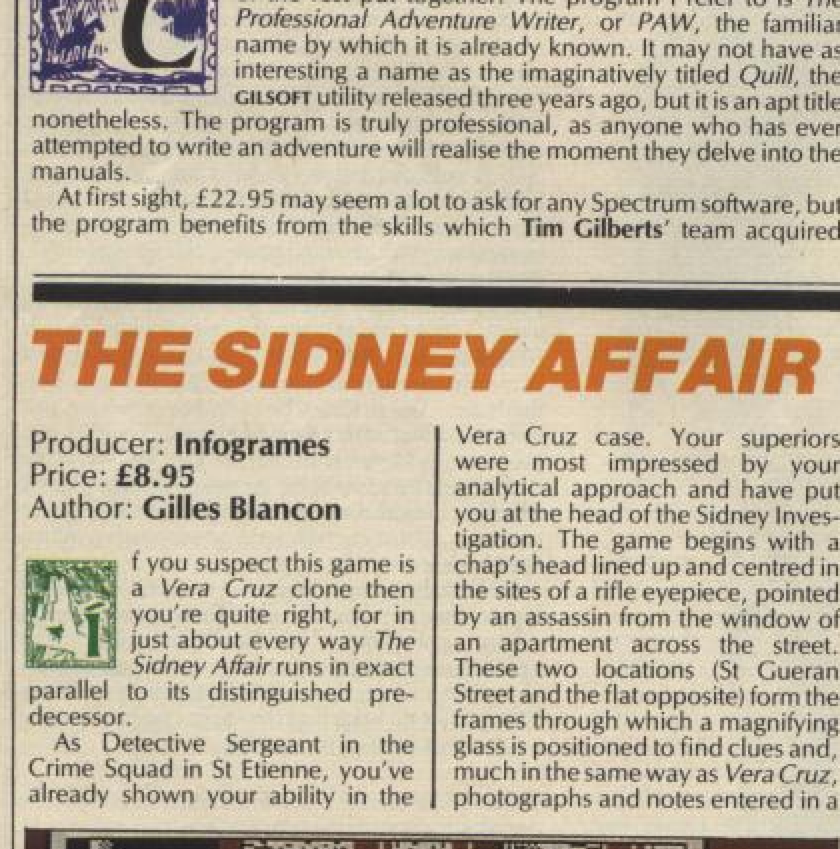
THE SIDNEY AFFAIR

Producer: **Infogrames**
Price: **£8.95**
Author: **Gilles Blancon**

If you suspect this game is a *Vera Cruz* clone then you're quite right, for in just about every way *The Sidney Affair* runs in exact parallel to its distinguished predecessor.

As Detective Sergeant in the Crime Squad in St Etienne, you've already shown your ability in the Vera Cruz case. Your superiors were most impressed by your analytical approach and have put you at the head of the Sidney Investigation. The game begins with a chap's head lined up and centred in the sites of a rifle eyepiece, pointed by an assassin from the window of an apartment across the street. These two locations (St Gueran Street and the flat opposite) form the frames through which a magnifying glass is positioned to find clues and, much in the same way as *Vera Cruz*, photographs and notes entered in a note book provide the starting points from which the investigation radiates.



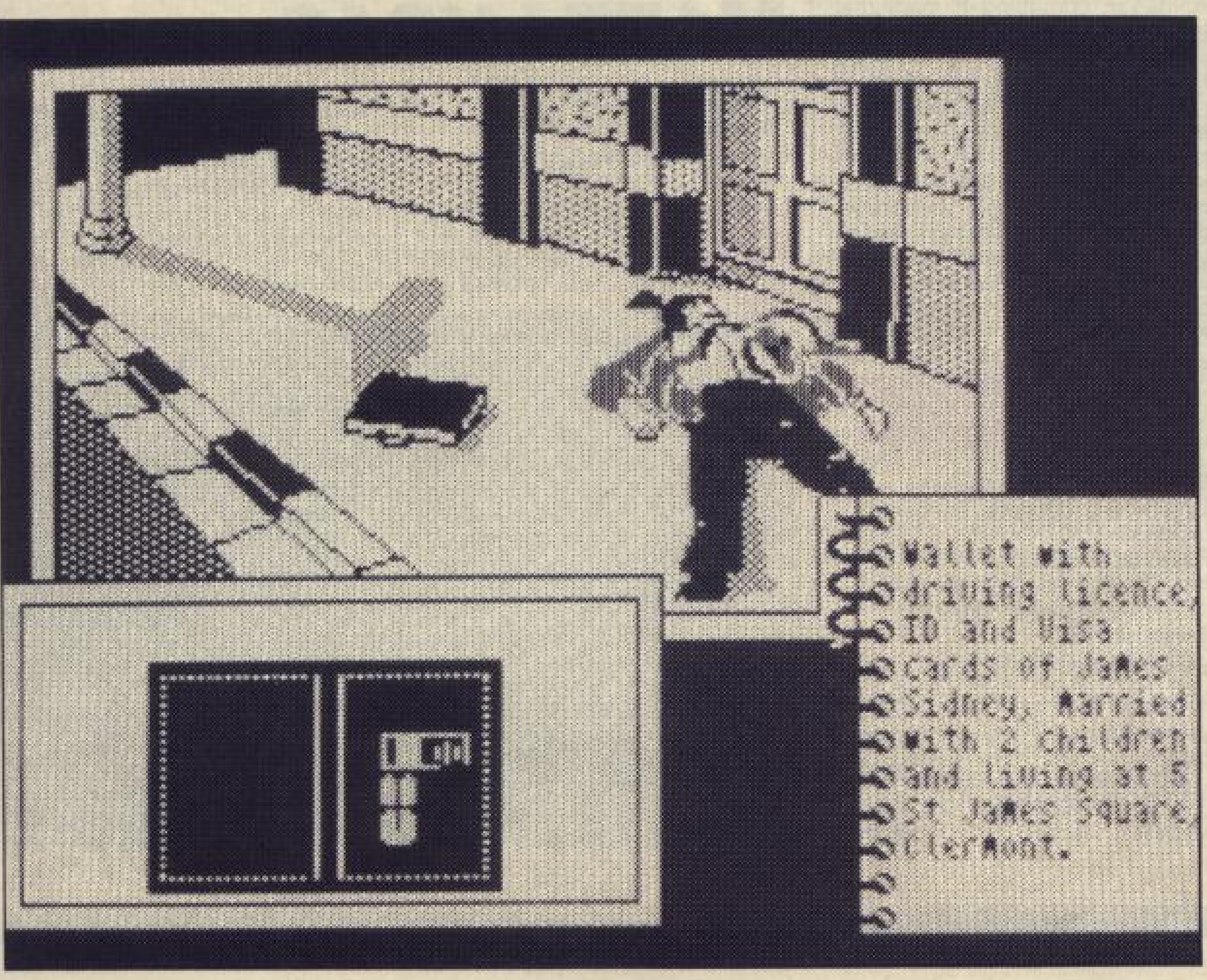


The Spectrum cursor keys glide the magnifying glass around the screen, and it won't take long to realise that systematically running the glass up and down assures no vital evidence is overlooked. Starting in the street, the man (who you see being killed in the first frame of the game) fell with his back to the pavement, with his briefcase lying unopened two or three feet away. Examining his left-inside pocket you discover a wallet with a driving licence, credit cards and an ID; this last, apparently, must be carried by everyone in France to prove they aren't an alien absconding from Mars.

The victim was a James Sidney, which accounts for the title and rules out any antipodean connotations, who was married with two children at 5 St James Square, Clermont. In the apartment across the way you find, guess what, a Camel cigarette like in *Vera Cruz*, a spent cartridge still reeking of cordite, and an invaluable fingerprint.

As far as I could tell Part Two is the very same Diamond Computer System found in *Vera Cruz*. It's here that I get the same negative feelings I had with that earlier game; I just don't think the instructions are explicit enough and I wonder how many people beyond the superhero sort get anywhere with these games. The blinding white background of *Vera* has been retained, much to my





chagrin, and the input routine can be a touch sensitive. Assuming the instructions I received are the same as those that come with the game, I couldn't really go overboard about *Sidney Affair* thinking that many people who buy it wouldn't get much beyond Part One.

The Sidney Affair is a superb idea but I'm not totally convinced it has been presented that well on the Spectrum. Given the originality of these Gilles Blancon games, and the popular appeal of Who Dunnit yarns, I can't see many *Vera Cruz* fans resisting this one.

COMMENTS

Difficulty: Part Two is a stone wall that may leave many non-plussed
Graphics: excellent scenes of the crime and mug shots
Presentation: good
Input facility: roving icon, structured sentences
Response: fast
General rating: good

Atmosphere	85%
Vocabulary	76%
Logic	88%
Addictive quality	87%
Overall	86%

KOBYASHI NARU

Producer: **Mastertronic**
Price: **£1.99**
Authors: **Clive Wilson & Les Hogarth**

Aye aye, I think I've seen something like this before. Referring back to Issue 33 (Oct 86) I find the culprit, none other than that sleepy offering from MASTERTRONIC, *ZZZZ*. And what do you know, that game was penned by the very same chaps we see here, namely Clive Wilson and Les Hogarth. Looking back to that review last Autumn I see that although I was impressed with the game's sophisticated looks and features the whole thing came crashing down due to an inept input system. Even so, judging from my mail bag, many still sought out *ZZZZ* for further investigation, and they seemed impressed by a smart icon-driven adventure for only £1.99. Well the game reviewed this month should go down even better for it has no annoying input failings, and the presentation is finer than was the case with *ZZZZ*.

ZZZZ was innovative enough, but by golly these chaps are offering even more for the piffling budget asking price. Here we have a new slant on adventure-style input. You still end up with verb/noun couplings but the way in which you get there is totally fresh and engagingly original. Around the borders of the picture there are well-drawn icons, much as were seen in *ZZZZ*. In *Naru*, however, there's the added bonus of being able to scan through the text for the noun to team up with the verb chosen via the icons. If you've played a few adventures in the past you'll quickly realise just how clever this system is; it keeps players' imagination tightly on the problem in question as they're necessarily restricted to the vocabulary in the location description. Hence, if the game has been designed well (and it has), there will be less misunderstanding between player and program. Again, you can only marvel at a budget game making this kind of real advance in adventuring.

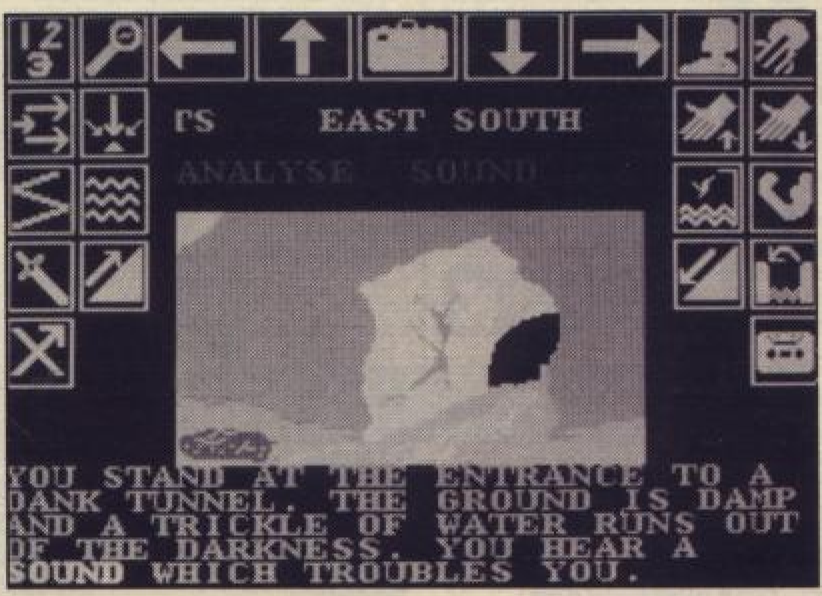
Kobyashi Naru is the final trial for those who would be one with the mortals. You stand in a closed chamber on the world of Ygor, a candidate to the Order. Sent here by Overlord of All, you must complete the Naru in all its phases. Success will bring you the knowledge and power of those who have transcended the need for life itself. Failure results in extinction.

Ahead are three doors and behind you a closed portal. It will not open again until you have completed the three tasks of Kobyashi Naru, and obtained the required objects from each. To help there are your wits and little else. The standard wrist terminal you are wearing may be able to analyse certain items and provide useful information, but its use is limited. A chime sounds and the Naru has begun . . .

The three portals you face at the start are marked Knowledge, Wisdom, and Understanding. There's a special option, SELECT, just for this move. No matter which portal you select to begin with, the immediate result is somewhat the same: a restricted movement between three or four locations followed by death when you try to get any further. For example, in the case of Knowledge, it's a giant, ugly, flesh-eating Krakod which engulfs you with its tentacles. Chopping one of the tentacles with the double-edged scimitax only sees more tentacles holding you firm.

While scratching your head trying to progress in each of the three sub-adventures you may find it profitable to analyse as much of your environs as possible by way of the ANALYSE icon. This command is similar to EXAMINE in mainstream adventuring but here EXAMINE is reserved for those items actually in your possession. Keeping with the first portal, Knowledge, it might be useful to run through this part of the game to illustrate just how well the adventure runs.

'You stand on a vast plain, a myriad of tiny creatures scurry about. The place is teaming with life. A sweet smell in the air. The scimitax lies on a mossy plinth'. Leaving aside the ungrammatical feel of that passage let's ANALYSE SCIMITAX. The ANALYSE part is brought into the verb window via icons bordering the picture, and the





noun placed up into its respective window next to the verb by way of moving through the text description until the noun SCIMITAX is highlighted. (The system here likes to return to the left hand margin of the text, leaving the left and right cursor keys to do the fine tuning. Given the way this adventure plays there's a lot to be said for using a joystick – Kempston is cited on the cover). ANALYSE SCIMITAX results in 'The divine scimitax of Baal, Etheric Warlord of Gath. The jewel-encrusted shaft ends in twin blades honed to perfection. A runic inscription translates into, I will always return'.

Pressing zero (or FIRE) releases the icon mode again so you can choose another noun. Now if you decide ANALYSE PLINTH is a good move the program scrolls a message across the top of the screen: STUDIED ANALYSIS REVEALS NOTHING OF RELEVANCE, which might seem a little boring, but what is more interesting is the scrolling itself which is superbly smooth and a further touch of class for what is supposedly a cheap game.

I could go on for some time giving good examples of how flexible the game is but suffice to say that the icons allow much leeway and the ANALYSE command in particular gives many a long and detailed synopsis way beyond the one-liners of mainstream adventure.

Kobyashi Naru is a superb piece of microcomputer programming for the paltry sum required. I wonder just how much of a game is left in memory once that allocated for all the snazzy programming is totted up, but this is a small query set against the attractive looks and style of a progressive cheapie like *Kobyashi Naru*.

COMMENTS

Difficulty: a head scratcher
Graphics: good icons, adequate pictures.
Presentation: attractive
Input facility: icons for verbs and word extraction for nouns.
Response: fast
General rating: innovative

Atmosphere	76%
Vocabulary	83%
Logic	84%
Addictive quality	81%
Overall	83%

MATT LUCAS

Producer: **Players**
Price: **£1.99**
Author: **Alex Williams**

Matt Lucas isn't a car emulsion, he's a private investigator who zips around in a red Ferrari, pulling up now and again to use it as a prop to pose against, leaning on the windscreen with gun purposefully pointed at the action (how's that for a Russell Harty introduction?).

The tough American city where this chap ekes his living is none other than the drugs capital of the States, Miami, lying luxuriously white-washed on the eastern seaboard of the sun-kissed peninsula of Florida. The curious geography of this coast probably explains how Matt always seems to be strolling by the sea, as inlets, harbour walls and sand-bars allow great intimacy with the ocean (sorry folks, I can't quite seem to kick this Russell Harty flavour).

In this, the land where red smarties are banned, it's your job to infiltrate the seedy drug culture of Florida and find out what has happened to your partner in crime-fighting, John Harpinger. It seems that the poor chap has been taken hostage by a ruthless gang, therefore it's your most immediate task to follow the trail of clues to the kidnapper's hideout. Your colleagues on the precinct are Cosby, Deringer and Makepeace (I made that last one up) under the world-weary direction of Lieutenant Davis.

This program (which appears to be a *GAC* clone) doesn't set the world alight with innovation, but I was most impressed with its competence for such a low asking price. The location descriptions show a fine writing style, the problems are interesting (even if the solutions are unimaginative), and the program makes good use of informative EXAMINE statements to keep the game moving along. Try these two location descriptions:

'Matt is near a T junction. Suddenly all the wealth of the city gives way briefly for the poverty of the high-rise flats', and 'Matt is outside

GRANGE HILL

Producer: **Argus Press Software**
Price: **£9.95**
Authors: **Matthew Rhodes, Colin Jones, Jeremy Nelson, Nick Vincent, John Pickford**

This review was to be the great exposé on *Grange Hill*, the television program everyone's heard about but never seen. Alas, several factors have conspired against this, the two major failings being my inability to find any bookshop that sells the book this program is apparently based upon, namely *Grange Hill After Hours*, and my missing the television program on several occasions due to a propensity for scoffing things about the time it goes out. I thought I had it beat when I chanced upon as large a collection of *Grange Hill* memorabilia as could be thought plausible, covering every aspect of the cockney rascals' education (or lack of it), piled deep in the children's section of Boots (this after many embarrassing scenes in learned bookshops where whispering 'Grange Hill' could reduce even the most composed assistant to bouts of the giggles - or was I just imagining it?).

However there was no sign of *After Hours* among the varied *Grange Hill* antics, and indeed, the antics of that famous former pupil, Tucker. The book continued to elude me but I did manage to see the TV program in question this very day, although a certain amount of my tea got deposited on the cast list in the Radio Times so I might just misspell one or two of the names.

There's been a bit of a fuss recently about the TV program *Tutti Frutti*, not because it's as boring as sin (nothing unusual in that), but because of its thick Scottish accents (though I wouldn't know, having never seen more than 15 seconds at a time). But what about this here *Grange Hill*? Stuck in front of the television, there's me sitting on every lilt and intonation trying to decipher words mumbled into jumpers and caught in coffee cups leaving only the feeling that something cockney's been uttered. I caught an episode 23 where Mr Scott gets his revenge on Trevor, Mrs McClusky punishes some rebels for reasons lost to some previous programme, and more to the point, women and girls want to fight for the right to hurl lethal red balls at one another, all in the name of cricket.

The story behind the game is a piece of cake. Goncho, whose mush is plastered over the screen during the early part of loading, has gone and got his Walkman confiscated for having it on in a lesson; and this after his last one was confiscated and lost. His mum wasn't too pleased at that, and so warned him he'd be skinned alive if he ever came home without the replacement she bought him. It's ten-to-four in the afternoon and Gonch is about to go home when he realises that returning home without the cassette player is going to lead to such a shouting match he probably wouldn't be able to hear a Walkman again. The only alternative seems to be to return to school after hours, break into the staffroom, and retrieve the machine. All this has to be done before midnight, and with the help of his trusty schoolpal, Hollo.

Grange Hill the computer game has tried its best not to be pigeonholed. It can't be said to be an adventure, as there are occasions where only deft control of a joystick or keyboard can guarantee progress – a very rare occurrence in adventure. This isn't the only arcade aspect either, as sudden deaths seem to lie around every corner. And herein lies one of the game's most serious drawbacks. The inability to save your position just before one of these untimely deaths results in much monotonous repetition of routes you've already mastered; a fundamental flaw this.

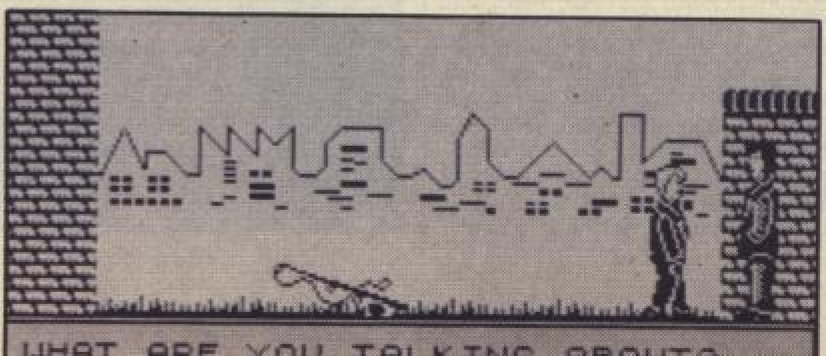
The upper half of the screen depicts the scene with your own character, Gonch, walking around outside the litter-strewn playing fields and perimeters of the school, as often as not accompanied by your sidekick, Hollo. Both you and he are animated, or more strictly, your legs are animated whilst the upper torso is rigid, with arms pinned down. The background graphics are rudimentary and, in my book, disappointing. Any characters you meet, like the celebrated drug pusher, also appear in this window, the text area below giving the opportunity to 'Just say no' (a phrase pinched from the training films for newly appointed bank managers).

The speech aspect isn't altogether successful in *Grange Hill*, although you can get Hollo to state how he would prefer to remain put rather than follow you any further, at one stage in the game. I've forgotten to mention the time element, where the clock runs at four times normal rate, which means you could be playing this game for (12 - 4) divided by four hours, which is a long time to play a game that never quite wins you over.

COMMENTS

Difficulty: deft control of keyboard or joystick required
Graphics: cheap game standard
Input facility: menu and sentences for speech
Response: fast
General rating: interesting theme and in some ways, interesting to play, but fundamentally flawed

Atmosphere	71%
Vocabulary	59%
Logic	79%
Addictive quality	62%
Overall	70%





the precinct. As he looks up at the familiar building he cannot help but think of his good friend and colleague, John Harpinger.'

These passages may seem unremarkable, but they are representative of a style which goes some way beyond the 'I am in/You can see' clichés of lesser games.

The game vocabulary is friendly without being a pushover; it might take a little while to get the right word combinations, but once achieved the correct solutions appear to be the most logical, or at least elegant. In the butcher's there's meat, which apparently must be bought with some presently non-existent money, and sawdust. EXAMINE SAWDUST gives 'Yellow and dusty. Very interesting!' while TAKE SAWDUST tells you in no uncertain terms, 'What the hell for?!' One non-standard useage is a reliance on TAKE only, with no GET option. However, any annoyance over this omission is somewhat assuaged by the use of the abbreviation of T for TAKE.



A good many locations can be explored before the player has to do anything beyond simply mapping the adventure, and it's quite some time before the first objects begin to take on unmistakable associations. A car standing in a filling station with its petrol cap removed, a tube and a container is one of the more obvious strings of objects that no doubt can be brought to bear on the problem of getting that red Ferrari started – sadly, it just isn't going to work when it's found in the very first location.

Getting some way into the game reveals only good things, but some may gall at the very slow response times; for example SMASH VASE isn't the right way to go about making the vase you find in Phil's place useful, but it takes the program an awfully long time to look through its vocabulary to tell you this. There's also the small point of missing part of the game should you play with TEXT only (and to be quite honest, although the graphics are by no means the worst I've seen, repeating them so often allows the player to become jaundiced with their overwhelming simplicity, so playing text-only can't be ruled out). A computer lies on your desk in your office and inserting a disk (found elsewhere) causes a map to show up on the computer screen. Unfortunately you won't see this map on the TEXT option (although, admittedly, it won't take you long before you realise that you've missed something). But small niggles apart, *Matt Lucas* is a really fine game for the asking price.

COMMENTS

Difficulty: easy
Graphics: average
Presentation: redesigned character set
Input facility: verb/noun
Response: sluggish
General rating: good

Atmosphere	82%
Vocabulary	78%
Logic	89%
Addictive quality	85%
Overall	84%



A CRASH Smash

THE PROFESSIONAL ADVENTURE WRITER

Producer: **Gilsoft**
Price: **£22.95**
Authors: **Tim Gilberts, Graeme Yeandle, Phil Wade, Alex Williams, Kevin Maddocks, Dicon Peeke**

Way back in May 1984 a young, lively, fresh and spirited magazine called CRASH reviewed a programming utility named *The Quill*. In that same issue there was an introduction to an adventure trail where adventurers could communicate with like-minded enthusiasts. That was exactly three years ago, and The Adventure Trail has now progressed to a sizeable part of its mother magazine; incorporating Reviews, Signpost for letters, Signstumps for queries, and Superheroes for adventure supermen and women.

Over the years *The Quill* has supplied many a good game for review, but it has now begun to fall behind despite additions such as *The Illustrator*, *The Patch*, and *The Press*. INCENTIVE's *Graphic Adventure Creator*, was supposedly the answer to the adventure writer's problems. However, I remained sceptical as all around praised a utility which I thought lost an opportunity to see adventuring through the late eighties. With *The Professional Adventure Writer*, or *PAW* for short, I now think we have the kind of utility which can lead the way to better and more imaginative adventure – the beauty of which is that the manuals are amazingly accessible, even for such a complex and thorough microcomputer program.

The manuals are a good place to start, because although the print is lightweight (small computer printer style) it remains immensely readable. It's hard to explain why though, as on first glance the introduction manual looks no different to any other. I attribute the manual's ability to keep the reader interested to **Tim Gilberts**' obvious love of adventuring, and his realisation that the odd joke or human touch can considerably lighten the load of a heavy passage. For instance, take this piece which follows a breakneck tour of your test adventure courtesy of the parser, "Right, back to the boring bit, QUIT from the game so we can deal with the next chapter in this saga." The fact that any part of any manual can be thought any more boring (or interesting) than any other will ruffle purists, but this kind of humanising is right up my street. The introduction is a superb publication, making no use of the pompous style which blights so many technical.

Now for a run through what *PAW* can actually be expected to achieve. The major improvements are in vocabulary handling (including GET and DROP ALL), presentation options, debugging of your adventures, ability to write up to the full 128K of the new Spectrum, allocation of weight to objects which can be worn, removed and/or form a container (eg trousers with pockets), interaction of independent characters, and quick, easily-drawn graphics with rubber-banding plus high speed shading.

In the line of vocabulary *PAW* provides a full parser, a device which converts the player's input into logical sentences which evoke suitable responses. The parser understands long, complex, chained commands using punctuation marks or the conjugations AND or THEN, including the ability to read IT for the last specified noun in the likes of GET THE SWORD AND KILL THE ORC WITH IT THEN DROP IT. The utility knows the player is referring to the sword with the pronoun IT due to the way in which nouns are numbered in its vocabulary list. In this case ORC has a value less than 50 and SWORD a value greater than 49 and hence knows that SWORD is the object referred to by the pronoun IT. Adjectives (GREEN jumper, LIT or UNLIT torch) adverbs (HAPPILY married), prepositions (talk TO him) can all be used to add colour to the vocabulary, along with the usual verbs and nouns. Vocabulary values lower than 20 are termed conversion nouns as they are treated as verbs by the program (NORTH for example). Many synonyms can be engaged to ensure that any input will receive a reply – for instance, BUS and TICKET might

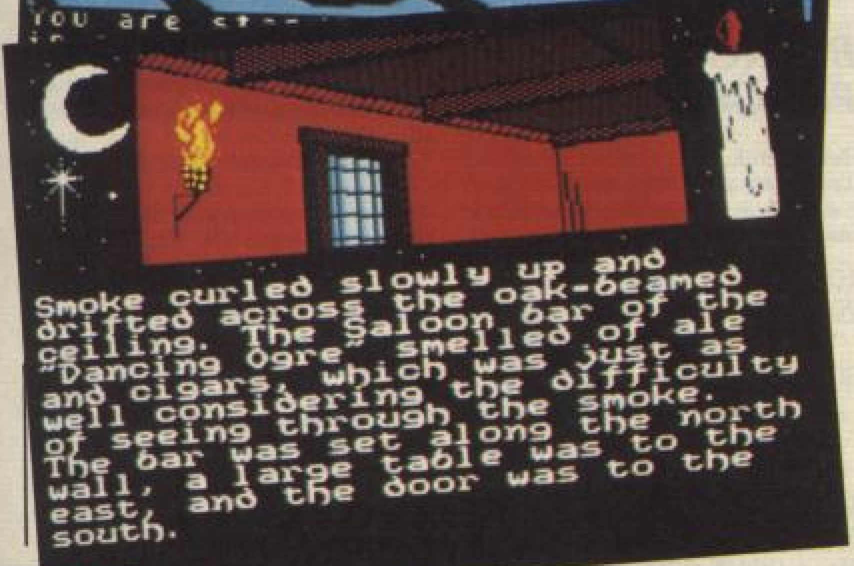


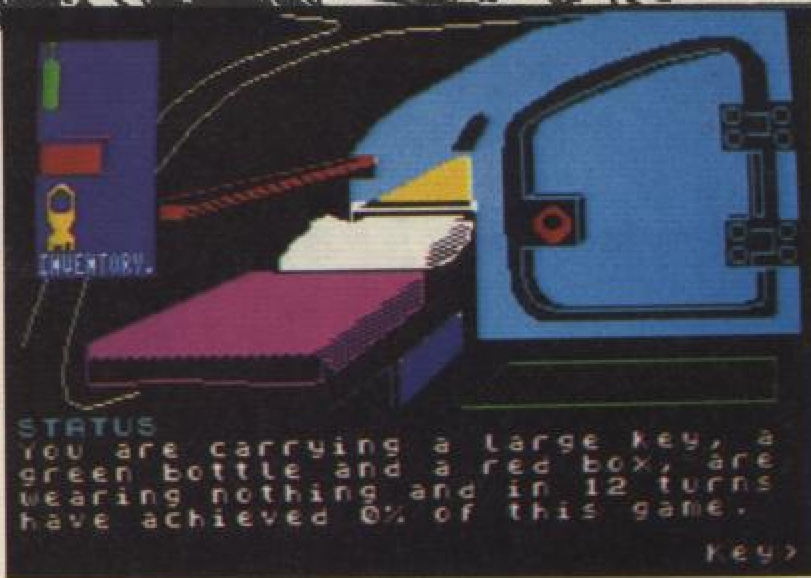


The screenshots which accompany this article are taken from the demonstration game Tewk, supplied as a database for users to examine. It shows some of PAW's useful features; compound message listing, the multi-command parser, modification of location pictures, a simple inventory window system and the utility's stunning graphics.











be given the same value of 54 while ANORAK and COAT are both 56. Seventy common words are already catered for in the vocabulary, the program recognises up to the first five letters (ensuring speed in processing and typing, along with memory saving), and all-in-all, *PAW* has done a very thorough job in the vocabulary field.

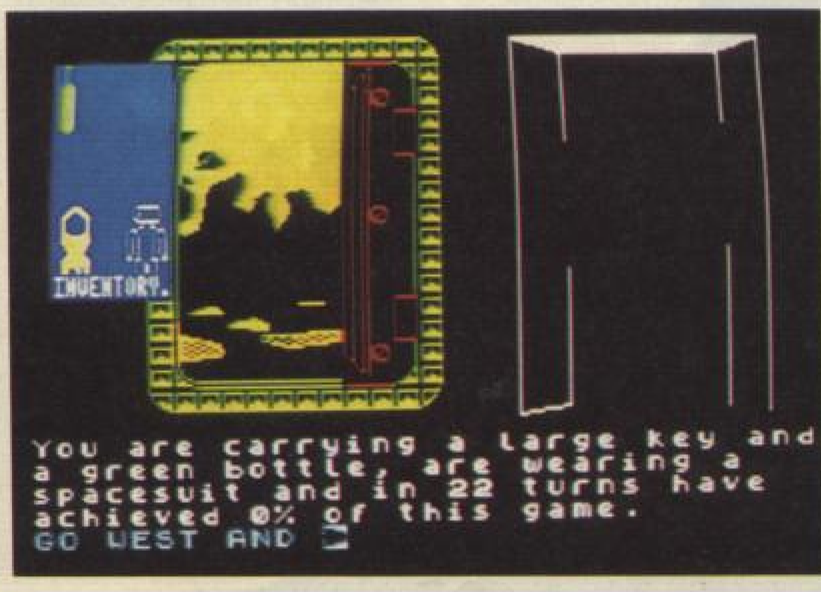
The screen display format can be changed at any time during play and options open to you are:
1. Full Screen Graphics
2. Continuous Scrolling Text
3. Split Screen Graphics
4. Fixed Text and Graphic Windows

Further variety lies in the built-in multiple character sets. These can be altered and interchanged during a game, even when between locations or in the middle of a sentence. I consider these options to be a liberating force and an escape from the cloned look of other utility adventures.

Debugging a near complete adventure is made easier by two additions. The first is the use of diagnostic flags revealed during the testing of a game. There are 256 flags of which 220 are free to the user to add, subtract, copy and compare. Flags can be used for character locations, counters in subroutines, or to hold the locations of objects. Locations and flags come into their own when used in Process tables, where Condacts (Conditions and Actions) can be grouped to achieve many weird and wonderful things. Condacts such as HERE (the current location of the player and flag 38), CARRIED (location 254), WORN (location 253) and NOT HERE (anywhere else including the not-created location 252) can quite clearly be seen to be related to locations and flags. This leads us on to the second feature to aid debugging, namely those Process tables. The advantage of using these tables lies in their ability to be nested as in subroutines, with the option of devoting, say, one whole table to a character's behaviour. This not only aids debugging, it also has positive implications for developing and improving subsequent adventures written using *PAW*.

The face a utility presents to the world is important, as it is here that the budding writer confronts the complexities of adventure composition for the first time. PAW shows a very friendly face with two pages of menu options – one primarily concerned with writing the adventure, the other with saving, loading or testing a written game. Single, mainly first letters (V Vocabulary, L Locations, C Connections, M Messages etc), lead onto sub-menus which always remind you of the way in which information is entered.

The Locations sub-menu, like most of the others, allows the Insertion of text, Amendment of text, Printing on screen (List), LPrint to printer, and Z to return to the main menu. *PAW* checks the syntax of all entries and ignores superfluous spaces, therefore I 3 will result in the Spectrum question mark, as locations are inserted in order and require no number – deleting 3 with the usual Spectrum keys sees the input accepted. On the other hand Amend *does* need a number, as shown by the information at the top of the sub-menu for locations, for example A 3 fits the bill of A (Locn) and is therefore accepted. When the player turns to Connections, blank entries will be found corresponding to the locations entered as this automatic system simply acknowledges the fact that every location requires connections to somewhere! Similarly Initially at, and Weight, open up new entries every time an item in Object is borne. To say this system is child's play might be asking for trouble, but it is clear the way in which *PAW* is constructed allows the greatest opportunities for a comparitively meagre outlay in time and effort.



This utility is a remarkable invention. It is a graphic adventure composing system of some 20K, released in one format but covering the entire range of Spectrums: the 48K (rubber keyboard), Spectrum + (plastic keys), the 128K, and the 128K Spectrum +2. Disc/microdrive versions will be available by mail order for the *Opus Discovery*, *DISCiPLE* and *BETA* interfaces. Anyone purchasing a cassette version now who wants to upgrade to a disc later can do so for the difference in price. Discs of 3, 3.5, and 5.25 inches will cost £27.95, while the price for microdrives is yet to be announced.

The Professional Adventure Writer is just that, a professional's aid, even if only for developing games for later coding. BASIC or machine code additions are catered for and a SAVE'd database can be verified. I found the program exciting and am excited by its possible achievements.

Overall 97%



BILINGUAL PROGRAM

Dear Derek,
It's easy to speak Brewster, but there is another way. Just type in this small mega utility:

```
10  POKE 23658, 8
20  PRINT "INPUT SEN-
    TENCE IN BREWSTER"
30  INPUT A$ : PRINT A$ :
    PRINT "MEANS IN
    ENGLISH (? =
    SPACE):"
40  POKE 23606,-8
50  PRINT A$
60  POKE 23606, 0 : GOTO
    20
```

Alexander Herbrand

ARCADE FREAK BECOMES ADVENTUROUS

Dear Derek,
I am new to the adventure scene as I have been an arcade freak all my life. I realise the scope adventure games have, as most of the games I bought, such as *Ghosts & Goblins*, *Fist*, *Avenger* etc only kept me entertained for a week or so. I recently bought *Gremlins* and have been addicted for months.

I would like it if you could give me some information on what to look for in adventures, and possibly a few games that could suit an inexperienced adventurer.

Anyway, I think your section is excellent, but it could be a bit longer and feature more games for inexperienced adventurer's like myself.

Giles Kellner, Wirral

I think of the top off my head I'd go for* Terrormolinos, *which struck me as both friendly (it tends to accept your input) and easy.* Matt Lucas, *reviewed this month, allows you to wonder far and wide, is not difficult, and won't break the bank as it is only £1.99. Furthermore, it should be in the shops by the time you read this.

DB

NOVICE HURDLES

Dear Derek,
With the two recent additions to the adventure making world (*Adventure Creator* and *GAC*) I was wondering what is best for the novice to get started on. Could you please advise me?

Chris Counsell, Southampton

A timely question indeed. As you will glean from the* Professional Adventure Writer *review this month I have never been a great fan of the* Graphic Adventure Creator *(having bought one in the early Amstrad-only days). Could I therefore draw your attention to* PAW *which I consider to be a work of genius.

DB

MORE LIFE ON THE GRANGE, OR OVER THE HILL?

Dear CRASH,
I have just completed a game from ARGUS PRESS called *Grange Hill*, at least I think I have! You see I got the Walkman and went home, and when I came to the part where Gonch's mother stands, this is what happened . . . 'Hello mum', you smile. 'Before you ask, look.' You point at your Walkman. 'Oh that', she replies, 'I'd forgotten about the thing.' Your heart sinks. 'But that reminds me', she continues, 'the school asked me to fill in a form for the insurance on the other one you had stolen. They need it tomorrow.' You feel sick – it means you must return the form to school. And when you do the staff are bound to remember the other Walkman being confiscated. They'll notice it's gone too, and who will they suspect? Your only hope is to put it back by morning by breaking in again'. Does this mean I've completed the game or is there going to be a follow-up?

Paul Goodwin, a proud 128 +2 owner.

NO MAGIC IN THESE POKES

Dear Derek,
Having completed the first three parts of *The Colour of Magic*, but come completely unstuck on Part 4, my wife and I were delighted to see the program sent in by **Paul Matthews** to list the vocabulary

(£20 software prize for March). Imagine our disappointment when my Spectrum +2 would not accept lines 60 and 80. Is it possible for you to let me know the full correct program, and how to run it with the game in order to list the vocabulary, as I'm sure this would help us towards completing what has been a good adventure. Also any hints or tips that have been sent in for this adventure, or one of the oldies *Castle Blackstar*, which is currently proving a real challenge.

P Perrin, Wilts

I don't know what the exact problem is here but I'm beginning to wonder just how compatible all the different Spectrums – I've had one or two problems with programs myself. As for your adventure queries, I can only realistically answer specific questions, and it may be worth reminding readers here that the Trail is a magazine column only, and on no account should stamped addressed envelopes be sent in as I am far too busy to individually answer any queries. Perhaps your letter gives me the opportunity to point out two things on my mind at the moment. The first is the way in which puzzled adventures should hunt out past copies of Signstumps as there may well be existing clues. Secondly, when submitting a query for Stumps, try to be as specific as possible, as one of the main problems I face is linking up vague queries to very specific solution sheets sent in by helpful readers.

DB

FROM GAC TO FAME AND FORTUNE

Dear Derek,
Recently, I purchased the *Graphic Adventure Creator*. I have spent many hours on the program, writing small and mostly uninspiring adventures as well as fiddling around with the graphics. I have, however, designed a very large adventure with graphics and character interaction. It isn't exactly LEVEL 9 standard but I would like to try and sell it to a small budget company. Please could you give me some advice on how to approach a company so that they would take me seriously? Also, what if they disown me, claiming they wrote it themselves?

I Sunter, Essex

First things first, and it's worth noting that the largest budget house, MASTERTRONIC, has a no-utility policy. As for approaching companies, send in a well-typed letter explaining the good selling points of your game. Do all in your power to ensure the tape you submit will load. Use high quality tape, record several versions and label these versions clearly on the cassette itself. Give a telephone number where you can be contacted at almost any hour, and expect to have to put the program on every conceivable computer should a company want the game. Sadly, unknown to the general public (but very well known to programmers like myself), some companies pay little and late, while others skip paying the programmers altogether. No wonder so many programmers went back to owning their own companies after the shake-out in the early eighties! As for your last point, I have never heard of any company stooping so low as to pinch a program in this way, so rest easy on that score.

DB

MIDNIGHT CURFEW

Dear DB,
I'm writing to CRASH Towers in response to two articles in the March Signpost section. Firstly, I was pleasantly surprised at **Stephen McLear**'s letter from Glasgow concerning the already fabled *Eye of the Moon*. It's good to know I'm not the only *Midnight* fanatic in the world, and feel bound to extrapolate the discussion.

I accidentally came across *The Lords of Midnight* a long time ago, and immediately proclaimed it to be 'the most sensational piece of software to hit the little Sinclair micro.' This **Mike Singleton**'s a genius, I thought, and I watched the software shelves eagerly for six months or so, snapping up the first copy of *Doomdark's Revenge* that appeared. It's very rare that I fork out the traditional tenner for one game, but again it was worth every penny – an outstanding mix of adventure, strategy, and graphical perfection. The individuality of the characters was especially excellent. Now a certain **Damen Andrews** of Watford wrote last month that he was having problems with, amongst others, *Doomdark's Revenge*, so I'll come back to that later with some tips.

However, this supposed Trilogy business set my pulse racing. Was it possible for a third, even better epic landscaping adventure? Seemingly not. I wrote to BEYOND explaining about the *Eye of the Moon* game, and a certain Simon Goodwin (sounds familiar!) replied saying the third epic was due for release in September 1985. September came and went and I wrote and phoned many times, but BEYOND had disappeared!

Then lo and behold I reached them again and was told 'Easter 1986' would be the release date. Ah ah. Easter came and went – no game. Then BEYOND must have fallen into a bottomless abyss because I didn't reach them again until late last year when I discovered they'd been bought up by FIREBIRD and the old team had 'retired.' At this point I was awaiting *Dark Sceptre*. They said that *Dark Sceptre* could be expected just before Christmas, and *Eye of the Moon* would follow in 1987.

Guess what! They were fibbing again. It's now February 1987 and I am told that *Dark Sceptre* is still undergoing production difficulties and *Eye of the Moon* may have to be scrapped! Now I realise that Mike Singleton is extremely talented, and therefore very busy. But I ask you, why set about starting three or more projects (*Dark Sceptre*, *Star Trek*, and the MELBOURNE HOUSE game) when the first one planned (*Midnight III*) is still to be finished, or maybe even started! So all I can say to Stephen of Glasgow and all other Midnighters is, we're gonna have a long wait. And Mike, get your finger out and concentrate on one or the other, not four!

Now that's out of the way, here are some tips for *Doomdark's Revenge*. In the *Lords of Midnight* there were basically two ways to win: Morkin's Quest or Military Victory. In comparison the options in DR are almost unlimited, as you can attempt to accomplish any number of the required actions. The full victory that reveals the hidden watchwords of Midnight on the Moonring requires the rescue of Morkin, the complete destruction of Shareth, and the safe return of Luxor, Morkin, Tarithel and Rorthron to the Gate of Varenorn. To attempt to explain here everything that must be done would take quite a while, and some adventurers may prefer to find out for themselves.

Here are a few basic hints:

1. Recruit as many Lords as possible: Tarithel begins game in the Fey realm, and she is an excellent recruitment officer. Luxor is not so brilliant, Rorthron is very good
2. Recruit Fey and Barbarians first
3. Objects such as Crowns, Spells and Runes are a great help, but it's not essential to discover the whereabouts of them. Go to towers to seek guidance
4. Unlike LOM, there is a never ending, rejuvenating supply of warriors and riders at the various fortresses and cities around the Icemark. It's important to keep your armies up to strength (1,000 – 1,200 men/riders each)
5. To slay Shareth you'll need a lot of manpower and many friends. Don't necessarily go looking for her – she'll come to you in about nine or so days time. Consolidate your position and force in some stronghold.
6. Because of the individuality of characters, they may gang up together in independent groups depending on who they are aligned to etc.
7. The rescue of Morkin is a great puzzle and it stumped me for some time. Tarithel is instrumental in his recovery, and the third dimension is also important
8. Don't worry too much about the Icelords. The manual says they are most difficult to recruit. In actual fact, due to their very treacherous nature, they can easily be recruited, especially by Rorthron and Tarithel – but watch out they don't turn traitor and revert back to Shareth
9. Be wary of Stones, Gates etc. Sometimes they may bring good fortune, sometimes not. You'll eventually get to know which ones do what
10. Finally, don't despair. If your armies are getting trounced and your commanders are rebelling, seek sanctuary in pits, tunnels, gates, anywhere underground as Shareth and company will not follow you underground.

These are just vague hints. *Doomdark's Revenge* is a phenomenal game which, apart from its predecessor *Lords of Midnight*, has no equal. Happy hunting!

S J Harding, Tamworth.

GAP – GRAPHIC ADVENTURE PROBLEM

Dear Sir,
Although I am not very good at adventures, I like trying to complete them (although I rarely do). When I had gotten bored of some of my arcade games I tried to find something that would be longer lasting. I thought of adventures . . . no I couldn't get anywhere in them. Then I thought, 'why not make my own adventure.' So I trundled off to my local computer shop and spent all my hard-earned pennies to buy an adventure maker called *GAC*. I ran home and started tinkering with it. Despite having a few problems, I have now nearly finished the first part of my adventure. This brings me to what I want to say.

1. In the *GAC* how do you get random messages. I've tried most ways but they don't work.
2. Also, how do you make a multi-load program (like *The Boggit*)
3. Can you link *The Artist II* to the *GAC* (for graphic purposes) If you can help me with these, myself and my co-writer would be very grateful.

Daniel Chapman

I have had many questions concerning the GAC and what it can and cannot do. Would some kind soul out there please write in with a full appraisal of what can be realistically achieved with this utility and I'll see if I can dig out a prize for the letter.

DB

THIS JUST CAN'T BE!

Dear Derek,
Just a short letter here. In the last issue of CRASH (38), you printed a supposed correction for my *Midnight* pokes first published in CRASH November 85. It's a pity, the supposed correction had the same mistake in it! The mistake was in line 60, which should read 60 DATA 34, 148, 96, 33, 24, 62

I was hoping to do some *Doomdark's Revenge* pokes for you, but after all the hard work of breaking into the protection system (POWERLOAD) and finding some pokes (I found nine in all ranging from no mist, through always recruiting if approach used, controlling any character (there are 128 of them!) and see the screen build up, my computer broke down before I could write the pokes program. So you'll just have to wait for them. Hope you have better luck typesetting your pokes programs in the future. I'll have to be going now, got a lot of A Levels revision to do for my exams in June.

Paul Stephenson, Leeds

I hope your university aspirations come true, Paul and thanks for finding the time for your letter.
DB

This month's £20 software is winging its way to S J Harding for lighting some of the gloom which has descended after Midnight.



Without further ado let's get stuck into those puzzles that have you flummoxed.

QUESTPROBE games, based upon comic book characters, are always popular, and this month sees queries on Spiderman *and* Human Torch *and* The Thing, *which I will endeavour to answer.*

Jan Hill *of Manchester wants to know how you deal with Sandman and is having some difficulty dealing with that (now rather famous) fan. Trouble is, he ain't even got any web fluid! Meanwhile,* Philip May *from South Wales is in the caves underneath the tar pit, but he's scratching his head like some demented monkey at the thought of not progressing any further.*

To defeat Sandman, DMJNC DFJMJOH before you enter the room. On entering the room FYBN DSJC twice, then TAKE ALL. As for the fan how about trying DBTU XFC BU GBO several times until it slows which allows you to DBTU XFC BU CVUUPO. As you're aware though, you need some of that web fluid, so here's a formula to work on: GET DBMDJVN DBSCPOBUF and IZESPDIMPSJD BDJE. Make your way to the chemistry lab (where else!) and type in NBLF GMVJE. To rekindle your interest in the Human Torch, try to get the hang of The Thing by waiting until your energy is 100%, turn your GMBNF on high, throw it at the boulder, GET PEBBLE, and fly down the hole.

No month of 'stumps could ever pass without a Seabase Delta query, and this merry month is no exception. Mike Hicks *is as sunk as a sub and has been dealt a blow (groan!) by his inability to enter the lift shaft or to lever the cannon. With the cannon problem he wonders if the hammer (found in the reactor room), nails, plank and barrel (from the tavern) have got something to do with it. He's so puzzled he thinks he's about to lay an egg which is more than can be said for his attempts to get the hen to do just that.*

*Well, let's start with the shaft, and who wants to enter a forbiddingly deep lift shaft for heavens sake? Far better to PQFO the QBOFM with the key that was in the GPPE GBSN. Examine UFMFTDPQF and down the shaft you will see the small metal disc used to play the computer game. The disc can be got at by dropping a XBTIJOH MJOF with a speaker NBHOFU attached. First of all you might find it useful to DIFX HVN and stick the buttons for the lift (details supplied by Matthew Tuck). To lever the cannon you'll need something long, it has been suggested that a length of TUSPOH XPPE could well do the trick. To remove the QMBOL in the first place you need the QJODIFT whereupon you can QVMM OBJMT. I say, I say, I say, how do you make a hen lay an egg? Answer: CMPX CVCCMF next to IFO. (*K Miles *supplied the answer to this hen joke).*

Time for a quickie here me thinks, from a regular in the Midlands. I can't answer all of Milan Petrovich*'s problems cause you lot out there ain't sent in the full solutions to* Adventure *or* Claymorgue Castle *(even though fame is now almost guaranteed due to the new credit system). However, his question on* Emerald Isle *which goes like this, 'I have given the seamstress the parachute but can solve nothing else. I can find no use for the four coins I have', can be answered this very month and here are the words of wisdom which will soon have the penny dropping. Insert TJMWFS coin, enter train. Purchase the HSBOVMFT with a CSPOAF coin and the HPME coin should be given to the OVSTF. Alright you clever accountant-types out there, you've only counted three coins. Well perhaps Milan got his sums wrong (or if he didn't this excuse should keep him at bay for another month).*

Malcolm Austin *wishes to escape the rock prison at the beginning of* Rebel Planet *and, in a similar vein, would like to skip the goblin's dungeon to defeat the red dragon in* The Hobbit. *In the jail CFOE CBST XJUI XSFODI and then BDUJWBUF MBTFS before DMJNC UISPVHI IPMF. The goblin's dungeon might release you after the following: SFE EPPS to the TX, wait until Thorin appears and say to him 'PQFO XJOEPX', 'DCSSZ NF', then 'HPXFTU'. THEN GO SW and DOWN, wait for the goblin. (Hobbit help –* Desmond Corrigan*). In the same game* Michael Palmer *wants to find the professor on the second planet having waited outside the university for hours. Leaving the academic for the guard he finds he can't keep the museum attendant happy and wonders if the display cabinets have any part to play. At the entrance to the university UBQ DSZTUBM with GPSL. Examine the exhibits to learn about the creature. Give CSFX to HVBRE.*

I'm a bit pushed for time this month but it's rumoured an Adventure Special is in the offing, perhaps next month, so I'll look forward to that. For now, keep sending in your most treasured tips and solutions, as well as any puzzling problems to:

SIGNSTUMPS, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1AQ.

S·U·P·E·R·H·E·R·O·E·S

If you are beavering away at Imagination *and* Kobyashi Naru *in the hope of becoming a SUPERHERO, then sad news for you – but great news for two May SUPERHEROES, Philip Hancock for* Imagination *and Robert Adams who gives a full solution to* Kobyashi. *He goes on to say that the game was not as involved as the three parts might suggest, and indeed, was the easiest adventure he has ever played. The* Kobyashi Naru *SUPERHERO date was the 1st of March. Philip confirms his status as* Imagination *SUPERHERO thus: 'I am writing to claim my place as a SUPERHERO for completing* Imagination *from the* FIREBIRD *Silver range at 8pm on Friday the 20th of February, 1987. The aim of the game is to count the number of stars in the universe. The game is quite funny but I was disappointed with the end. All that happened was a short message saying '1, 2, 3, 4. This will take quite a while, 5, 6, 7, 8' and Game Over.' N Coburn (6th March) and David Adamson (bought 7th and solved 10th March) can only imagine what it would be like to be a SUPERHERO. Both provided full solutions which will prove invaluable for readers' queries.*

He-Man and Masters of the Universe *and* Custerd's Quest *have fallen to the one SUPERHERO. Yes, following the two double SUPERHEROES of last month, there is now another who has taken on the challenge of two adventures and come through with the ultimate accolade. Those vital dates are March 13th (*He-Man*) and March 19th (*Custerd*) and the superhuman chap is Andrew C Edney of London. He confirms: 'When you finish* He-Man *you are told you have disarmed the machinery that has been destroying the land, trapping Skeletor. Well Done! When you finish* Custerd's Quest *you are told how you have successfully guided Sir Custerd to the triumphant end! A truly great achievement!.'*

And lastly for this month let us salute a joint effort to discover the O Zone *from* COMPASS SOFTWARE. *This game was cracked in two days by Steven Thompson and Stephen Robertson of Gateshead. The date was February 24, the time 4.10 pm and the end message, 'I fire the laser at the warhead. It's effects are immediate and the missile begins to shrink. I lose my grip and fall from the sky into the sea. As I look up at the shrinking missile it bursts into harmless flames. As I swim back to the island I catch a glimps of a very tiny man surfing on a twig in front of me. Could it be . . . ?'*

PLAYING TIPS EXTRA



MAPPED

FUTURE KNIGHT (Part Two)

DRAGON'S LAIR II – in 3D! ★ ANTIRIAD

TARZAN ★ SCEPTRE OF BAGDHAD

INTO THE EAGLE'S NEST ★ SHORT CIRCUIT

FAT WORM ★ CONQUEST ★ FROST BYTE

POKED

SIGMA SEVEN ★ SHOCKWAY RIDER

ANFRACTUOS ★ SPACE HARRIER ★ TRAP

BOMBJACK II ★ ARKANOID ★ TRANSMUTER

SOLVED

ACADEMY ★ FUTURE KNIGHT ★ ASTERIX

SHORT CIRCUIT ★ AND LOADS MORE

PLUS A BONANZA OF GOLDEN OLDIES!



Lloyd Mangram

We did it last year – at least Robin Candy did it, and I wrote the introduction – and it was a great success. Everyone said they loved the Special Playing Tips Supplement. However, the last one was a mere 16 pages; this year it has grown to a massive 32, packed with hints, tips, cheats, POKEs and maps.

Since the beginning of time, somewhere around 1983 as far as we are concerned, people have been spending more time hacking games than actually playing them.

Since those days things have changed. Gone are the simple POKEs that could be entered by MERGEing a loader and sticking the POKE before the RAND USR statement. Routines are now more involved, and the competitive rate at which they are produced is often alarming. Teams, such as The Haxby Hackers and the Mega Team as well as individuals like Phil Churchyard and Jon North, have achieved cult status for their hacking exploits through the pages of CRASH.

Many of the routines in this special edition just have to be typed in, run and the tape loaded as usual. The game should then run, good typing willing, normally but with the POKEs installed. If other systems need to be employed, it's stated in the introductory paragraph.

Thank you everyone who sent in POKEs and tips to make this Supplement the size it is – and please continue to do so or I'll be out of a job!

■ LM

THE COMPLETE

Over three months we've collected quite a few tips for CRL's *Academy*. For the Special Supplement, here they are again, plus a few new ones. Thanks to Camilo Mesias **and** Russell Mulcahy.

ACADEMY TIPS

MISSION ONE

'If It Moves . . . '

You find that your base is surrounded by four sets of Lighthouses in pairs. Do not destroy these as they are necessary for navigation. Design your own ship with as many of the following characteristics as possible: *good lasers; scanner; 4 bombs; 8 missiles; some ammunition; a compass; good main drive.* Then fly around close to your base and get rid of anything that isn't one of the Lighthouses.

Return to GLV and then equip. Fly out in between the sets of Lighthouses. When you find a ship steer towards it, but slow right down. There are groups of ships which thrash you in close combat, so stop and pick them off one by one. If at first they don't come towards you, inch closer and that should tempt them into combat. Use up all your missiles against them and then turn towards GLV (use ADF) and burn. Change view to rear and keep shooting. Drop as many bombs as possible and be careful that you don't crash into GLV while facing backwards (now that would be embarrassing!). With some luck the bomb will detonate your enemy's ships. If it doesn't, return to GLV, regroup, re-equip and repeat.

Repeat this manoeuvre for each direction of the compass, destroying Lighthouses so that you know where you've been. You should easily get a pass on this level. If it gets dark, return to GLV and wait five minutes until the sun rises again.

MISSION TWO

Red Dawn

Use the same ship as in Mission One, but add Jump/door unit, I/R or flares, and 8 rounds of ammunition. Do not shoot the jump pads! This is crucial.

First destroy everything around the GLV except the jump pads. Re-equip and jump somewhere. You find yourself at one of the outposts. Locate the robot factories and keep well away from them until the very last minute or else they'll thrash you. Shoot everything else. Fly between the factories, bombing as you go. Use ADF to return home once you are sure that the factories are gone (use scanner). Use your ammunition because the robot factories lob robot missiles at you very quickly indeed. If you run out of ammo then burn home, but face backwards so that you can use all the missiles. It's a long drive home, but don't panic as there is enough fuel for a two-way journey. Re-fuel, repeat and re-equip and head back to get the other factories.

MISSION THREE

Meltdown

This is probably the hardest of the first four missions. Get a new ship with: high shield, high lasers, high AMMs; 4 bombs, scanner, a compass, and missiles . . .

Avoid the mines which are shown on the scanner as four dots, close together in a small square. Shoot these while they are still at a distance. Every now and then slow down, stop and look at the scanner. Anything still moving is a ship or a missile so blast it before it gets you. Avoid the fortresses if possible or bomb them if you have to (remember to get well away from the explosion yourself or it'll be bye-bye Skimmer).

The volcano-shaped objects are indestructable and NOT the reactor, so don't waste your ammo on them. The reactor is shown on the small map of this level. Time is the most important thing in this mission, therefore you can't do the old trick of waiting for the sun to come up – perseverance is the only thing that will get you through this mission.

MISSION FOUR

Softly Softly

This mission is dead easy. Use a ship with good lasers, main drive, shield, scanner and compass. Follow the corridor of mines carefully and repeat the process of stopping and checking the scanner for ships – there are a few. When you get to a corner be careful not to turn into the mines. For speed, try to use missiles on ships attacking you. Remember, scoring is on a time basis, but dock very carefully at the end or you may waste it all!

GENERAL TIPS

1) Use low power steering – it is easy to control. If you become



ACADEMY TIPS

surrounded, change view to shoot the ships rather than turning around. If there is something in your way – for example a building – then stop, otherwise you needn't change your flight path.
2) Bombs are extremely useful, but you rarely need more than four because you can only release one at a time and you can re-equip after destroying something by returning to the GLV.
3) If ships are attacking you from a good distance, stop and pick them off with lasers and missiles. If surrounded, drop a bomb and burn away, changing view to shoot as many ships as possible. They follow you and a bomb may well get rid of the lot of them.
4) In the buildings (GLV for example) you can abbreviate the written commands by adding a full stop.
5) For really high scores, don't dock with the GLV if you have 85 to 89 percent as it adds 5 percent and you will be forced to end the game.
6) Don't shoot the lasers aimlessly: make sure that they are going to hit something before you fire. Using this method the lasers won't overheat too much.
7) Mines are deadly, so shoot them from a good distance. They are often grouped in fours in the shape of a square (but not always).
8) When you complete a mission with more than 90 percent, save the game so that you can load it in the next time you play *Academy*. This way you can save a lot of time.



MORE ACADEMY TIPS

Here are some of Russell Mulcahy's tips for levels two and three.

Level Two – Cipher
Design a Skimmer with a door unit and missiles. Follow one set of lighthouses until you see the reactors, which are easier viewed on the scanner. Approach slowly, shooting anything that attempts to blast you, but take care not to hit the reactor or it won't allow you to enter. Dock with the reactors and get the codes.

Return to the GVL, blasting the lighthouses as you go so you know you've been that way. Re-equip and repeat the procedure for the other reactors. Once all codes have been extracted, return to the GVL and go into the codes system. To begin with it's best to try and match one piece of code with every other piece until a match is found. The codes look like two numbers when completed.

At the OK Coral
Lots of missiles and good shields are required for this. The missiles are for the armoured crawlers which are invulnerable to lasers. Generally, using scanners, you should seek out groups of robots and approach them slowly. As they attack, zap them, don't use the missiles.

Hide and Seek
Delay bombs are needed, but missiles, AAMs or good lasers are not essential. However, it's wise to keep a hold on some good shields. The suppressor droid is moved by shooting at it – but they're difficult to control. Move one over to a group of solar discs; close enough so you can enter the group without being shot. Position yourself so all discs are visible on the central blue square of the scanner.

Turn round and fire at the suppressor, as you don't want to destroy it with discs. Keep firing until the discs return your fire, then drop the delay bomb and escape by flying towards the suppressor – but don't crash into it. If this is done correctly the bomb should destroy all the discs but not the suppressor. Remember – you only have two suppressors so don't waste them.

Level Three – Laserium
Dead easy! Design a Battle Skimmer with good lasers, shields, missiles, scanner, furry dice . . . No, cut the furry dice. Don't charge around the landscape, take it easy, returning to the GVL if you're damaged. Don't launch too many missiles at once, as this increases the chances of a robot AMM launch. You should have no trouble in getting 100 percent on this one.

Hades II
Use the Battle Skimmer from Laserium, but add a jump unit if it hasn't already got one. Be careful not to destroy the jump pads.

Sands Of Time
To destroy the reactors use delay bombs or fire a missile at very close range. Watch out for solar discs protecting one reactor as there are no suppressors. In this mission there's no real point carrying on after 60 percent, as the other missions should build up your score.

Mission Improbable
Similar to Cipher only with jump pads. A suppressor is required to use the first jump pad, as it's surrounded by solar discs. Apart from that it's quite easy.

AND THE FINAL INSTALMENT . . .

After months of waiting it's finally here, the final instalment of the tips for the spawn of *Tau Ceti: Academy*, supplied by Russell Mulcahy from sunny Sheffield. Now, where did we leave off . . .

LEVEL FOUR

Ceti Revisited
Very like Mission Improbable except there are no solar discs. Make sure you refuel at every opertunity as there are a lot of jump pads. Again, quite easy.

Out of the Frying Pan
In this one, the Hunters attack in groups, so you'll need missiles, good lasers and strong shields to survive. If you take it slowly, it shouldn't be too difficult.

Don't Panic
You need delay bomb to elminate the solar discs and robot factories. The beacons lead to the supressor 'car park' (watch out for mines), and the lighthouses lead to the discs and factories. Destroy the discs as in Hide and Seek – except you won't need to worry about destroying the supressors. The easiest way to the factories is to fly between them, zapping their missiles with AAMs. Drop a bomb in the centre of the group and fly away. Don't use lasers to shoot the missiles as you may destroy your own delay bomb.

Needle in a Haystack
Rather like 'softly, softly' except the path through the mines is quite tortuous. Watch out for fortresses and don't worry if you set off a mine – just wait a while to allow the shield to recharge. When (if!) you reach the GVL, remember to quit if you haven't scored 90 percent or more.

LEVEL FIVE

Coal mine
You need your trusty Battle Skimmer but this time replace the jump/door unit with Infrared. Use the same tatics as for the other shoot 'em up's and you should be okay.

Paz!
Here you meet the rather interesting super missiles which cannot be destroyed! At the beginning, the best thing to do is to run away – very fast. Keep firing with your rear lasers as you do so, and when clear slowly return, shooting things as soon as they come into range. Try and destroy the fortress at extreme range – before they fire those really awful missiles. if one is fired, there is nothing you can do, so just hope your shields are strong enough. Quit as soon as you get a decent score.

Protector
You'll need a high main drive for this. This way you'll be able to knock out a few trackers right at the beginning, before they escape. After that, simply 'seek, locate and destroy' – but watch out for mines.

Shepherd
Watch Towers are moved like suppressors. You'll know when you've got one close enough to the GVL as your score will increase. Don't put them too close as they may get in your way while docking. Watch out for mines. In general, you should treat every 'blip' on the scanner with caution until you can see what it is and then take appropriate action.

Phew! That's the lot for *Academy*! Can there be anything left of the game to play, I wonder?

FUTURE KNIGHT

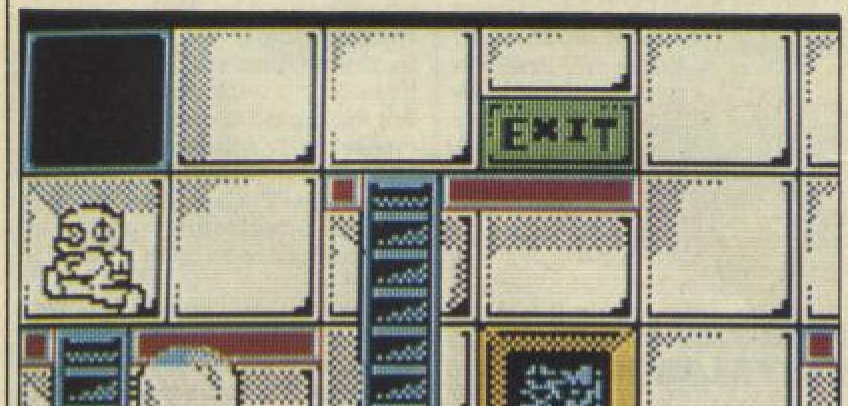
Last month I printed Adam Thompson's tips for the first part of *Future Knight*. Now with the map for Part Two of the game, there are more tips, but just to set the scene, I'll repeat last month's solution.

First you need the Safe Pass. go left, then up, left again, then right and grab the Safe Pass. Go back right. Go down, kill the Large Robot and go through the exit. Now you have to locate the Securo-Key, the Platform Key and the Exit Pass. Go left, then through the second opening on the right. Kill the Robot and go up, left, up and through the exit. Go left through four rooms, and through a secret door on the left. Go through two more rooms to the left, and through the exit.

Go right through five rooms, get the Securo-Key, leaving the Safe Pass behind. Retrace your steps to the exit and go through. Go left, then down through three rooms and you should be presented with the message; 'This exit is locked, fool'! Use the Securo-Key and go back to get the Safe Pass, then back through the exit. Go right, get the Platform Key, go back left, and through the exit opened with the Securo-Key.

Go down six rooms and through the exit. Go down a further six rooms and use the Platform Key – a Platform should appear. Go down, get the Exit Pass, then retrace your steps to the exit. Go through and up six rooms to the exit.

Go through, go right, and through the exit. Go clean through six rooms and another exit. Go down, right, down, kill the Large Robot, go left, and through the exit. Go left, right, down two rooms, left and walk into the exit – but remember to use the Exit pass. Walk out of the exit, then back in, and you should be on the planet's surface.

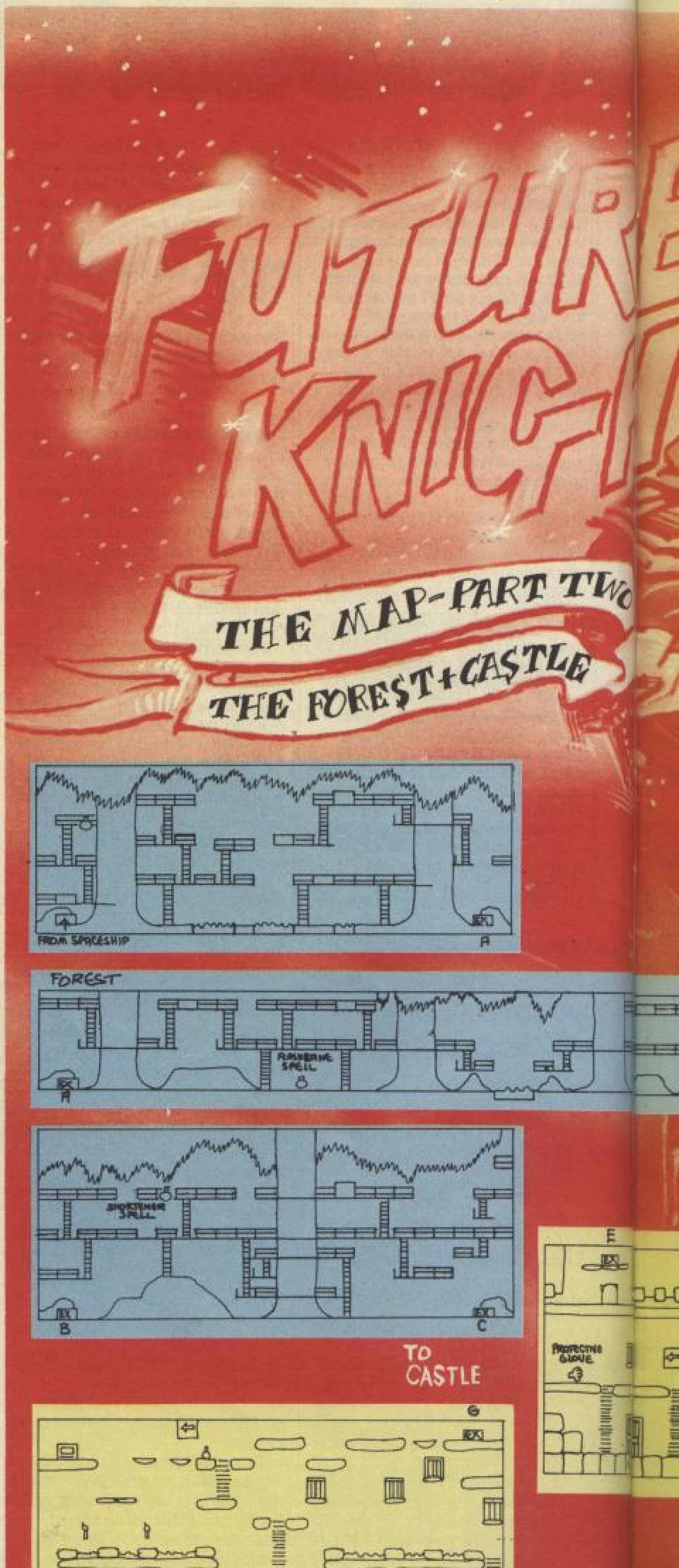


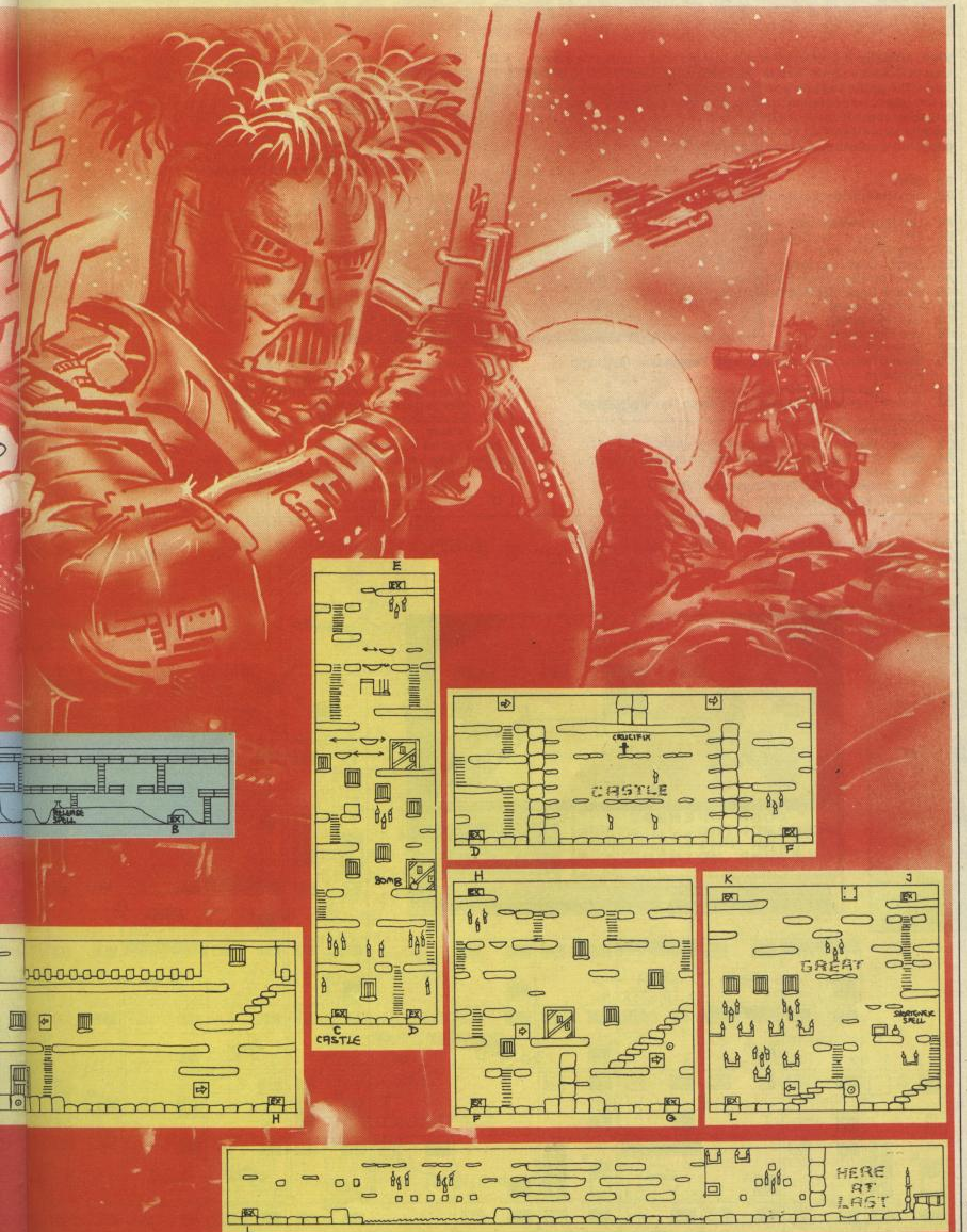
▶ On the second level of Future Knight

FOREST AND DUNGEON SOLUTION

The final part of the solution of Gremlin's heroic platform adventure, *Future Knight*, comes from Andrew Johnson, an intrepid Knight in shining armour, who comes from Sheffield, the same place as the Gremlin programming team. But I'm sure that has nothing to do with his promptness. Eh, Andy?

Go through to section nine ana collect the Bridge Spell, through to section ten and use the Bridge Spell at the beginning. Through to section 11 and through the exit at the top of section 12. Now in section 13 collect and use the Glove and go through to section 14 into 15. Go to the bottom of section 12 and make your way back to section ten and collect the Release Spell. Go right through to section 20 until you reach the bars that blow up the Henchodroid. Use the Release and go through to the last screen and walk through the Princess and the game is finished.



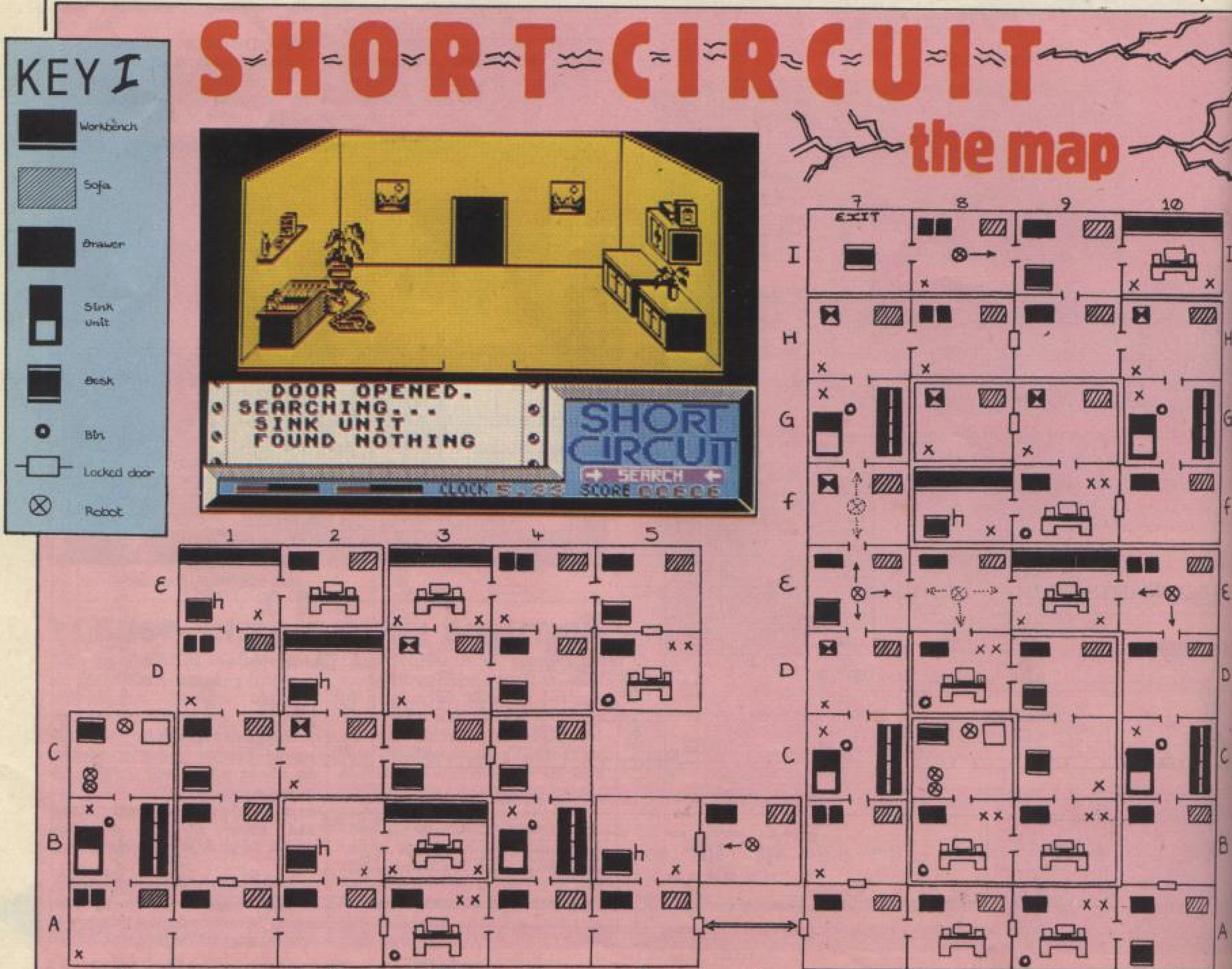

BALANCE SPELL
B
E
EX
BOMB
C
CASTLE
D
CRUCIFIX
CASTLE
F
H
G
K
J
GREAT
SHORTENER SPELL
L
HERE
AT
LAST

DON'T READ THIS YET!

DON'T GET SHORT CIRCUITED

Well, actually it probably won't matter that much, It's a solution to Ocean's *Short Circuit*, and although it's reviewed in this issue, the game has been on the streets for some time (it came in too late to be reviewed in last month's CRASH). The solution and map come from those Industrious Hackers from Haxby, but thanks as well to Karl Fudge and Ian O'Connor, who also supplied a solution and map, which were very useful.

E1 Start
E2 Link: Select Search, Use, Read: Search Drawer: Get Blue passcard
B1 Use Blue (twice – both sides)
B3 Link: Select Look, Break, Drop
A1 Drop Blue in sofa
E5 Search Desk: Get file key
A0 Use Key: Drop key in Sofa: Search file: Get Pink passcard
C0 Search Desk: Get Red passcard
E5 Use Pink (once)
C3 Use Red (once)
B5 Use Pink (once)
A5 Drop Pink and Red in Sofa
C0 Search Robot: Get Laser Software: Search Box: Get Jump Hardware
A5 Drop Laser and Hardware in Drawer
D5 Search Drawer: Get Drawer key: Search Terminal: Get Lit Cigarette
D4 Use Drawer key
D2 Search Workbench: Get Monkey Wrench
B4 Break Sink: Use Wrench: Drop Wrench in sink
D4 Search Drawer: Get White passcard
C4 Use Cigarette: FIRE! Drop Cigarette in Sofa
A2 Use White (once): Go right
B6 Use key: Drop key in Sofa: Search Drawer: Get Grey passcard
A5 Search Sofa: Get Red and Pink passcards: Use Grey
A7 Use Red (twice)
A8 Use Red (twice)
A10 Use Grey (twice): Drop Grey and Red in Sofa
C10 Search Bin: Get Hacking Disk
A9 Use Disk: 2: Low Mode: Drop Disk in Terminal
A5 Search Drawer: Get Laser and Hardware: Avoid Robots (F7, E7, E8, E10) operating at one minute intervals
H7 Drop Laser and Hardware in Sofa
A9 Search terminal: Get Disk
B9 Use Disk: Set Service Time (about 3 minutes ahead of the present time): Drop Disk in Drawer
H7 Search Sofa: Get Laser and Hardware
H8 Wait for Service Time
H7 Follow Robot through the Door
H9 Drop Laser and Hardware in Sofa
I10 Search terminal: Get Drawer key
F10 Use key: Drop key in Sofa: Search Drawer: Get Gold passcard: Use Gold (twice)
F9 Drop Gold in Terminal
G9 Use Pink (once): ALARM! Drop Pink
F8 Search Workbench: Get White passcard
H9 Get Laser and Jump Hardware
I7 Drop Laser and Hardware: RIGHT!: (E3)?
E3 Now to get the Laser Circuit
B9 Search Drawer: Get Disk: Use Disk: Set Time: Drop Disk in Drawer
H8 Wait for Service Time
H7 Follow Service Robot
I7 Search Table: Get Laser Software and Jump Hardware – also carrying the Laser Circuit
I7 Exit!



1 THE GREAT GOLDEN OLDIE COLLECTION

SHORT CIRCUIT: Objects

- A0 Pink Passcard (Locked File)
- A7 Pen (Drawer)
- B0 Can Opener (Bin) Cup of Coffee (Unit), Scared Mouse (Sink)
- B3 Lunch Box (Workbench)
- B4 Cheese (Unit)
- B6 Grey Passcard (Locked Drawer)
- B7 Pencil (Sofa)
- B9 Calculator (Terminal)
- C0 Red Passcard (Desk), Jump Hardware (Robot), Laser Software (Robot)
- C1 Video Tape (Desk)
- C7 Can Opener (Unit)
- C8 Tin of Grease (Desk), Laser Circuit (Box)
- C10 Hacking Disk (Bin), Green Bottle (Unit)
- D2 Monkey Wrench (Workbench)
- D4 White Passcard (Locked Drawer)
- D5 Drawer Key (Drawer), Gorget (Locked Drawer), Lit Cigarette (Terminal)
- E1 Pound Coin (Palm)
- E2 Blue Passcard (Drawer), Calculator (Terminal)
- E3 Paperclip (Workbench), Stapler (Terminal)
- E5 File Key (Desk)
- F7 Paperclip (Book Unit)
- F8 White Passcard (Workbench)
- F10 Gold Passcard (Locked Drawer)
- G7 Paperclip (Sink)
- G10 Can Opener (Unit), Green Bottle (Sink)
- F10 Drawer Key (Terminal)

LOCKED DOORS

A2/3	White
A5/7	Grey
A8/9	Red
A1/B1	Blue
A7/B7	Red
A10/B10	Grey
B5/6	Pink
C3/4	Red
D5/E5	Pink
F9/10	Gold
G8/9	Pink
H8/9	Service Robot

ROBOT MOVEMENT

High Mode: E7 & E10
Low Mode: E7 or E8 or E10 or E7

Stationary Robots alerted by alarms are at: B6 & I8

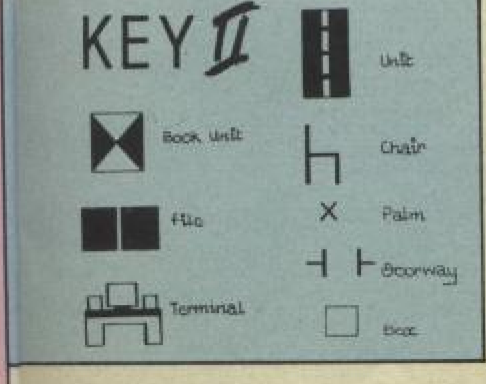


TABLE OF CLASSICS

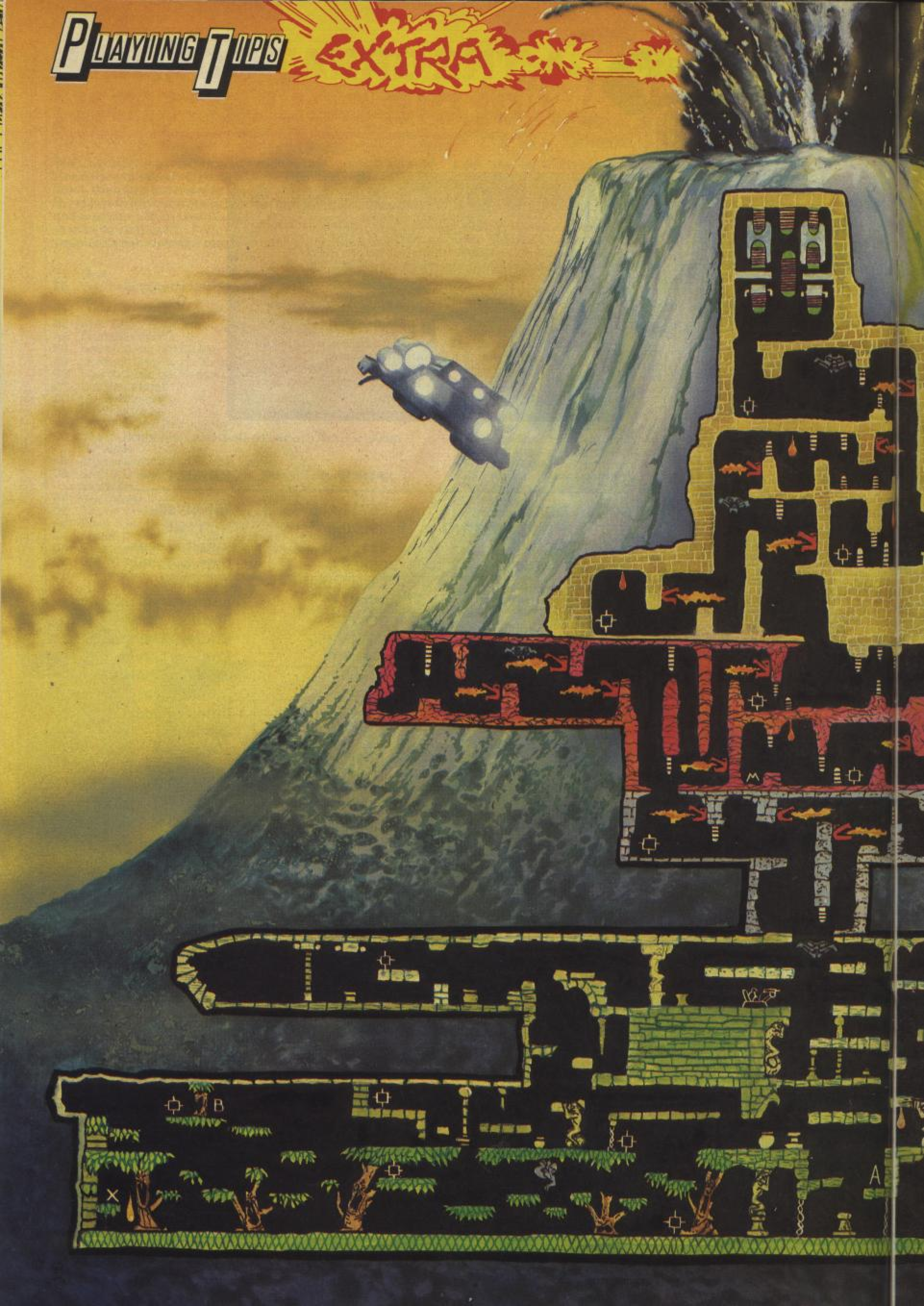
Robert Gabriel of Uffculme in Devon has compiled a table of POKEs for a veritable collection of Golden Oldies. The best way to use them is to insert them just before the RANDOMIZE USR statement. Alternatively you could use a multiface One.

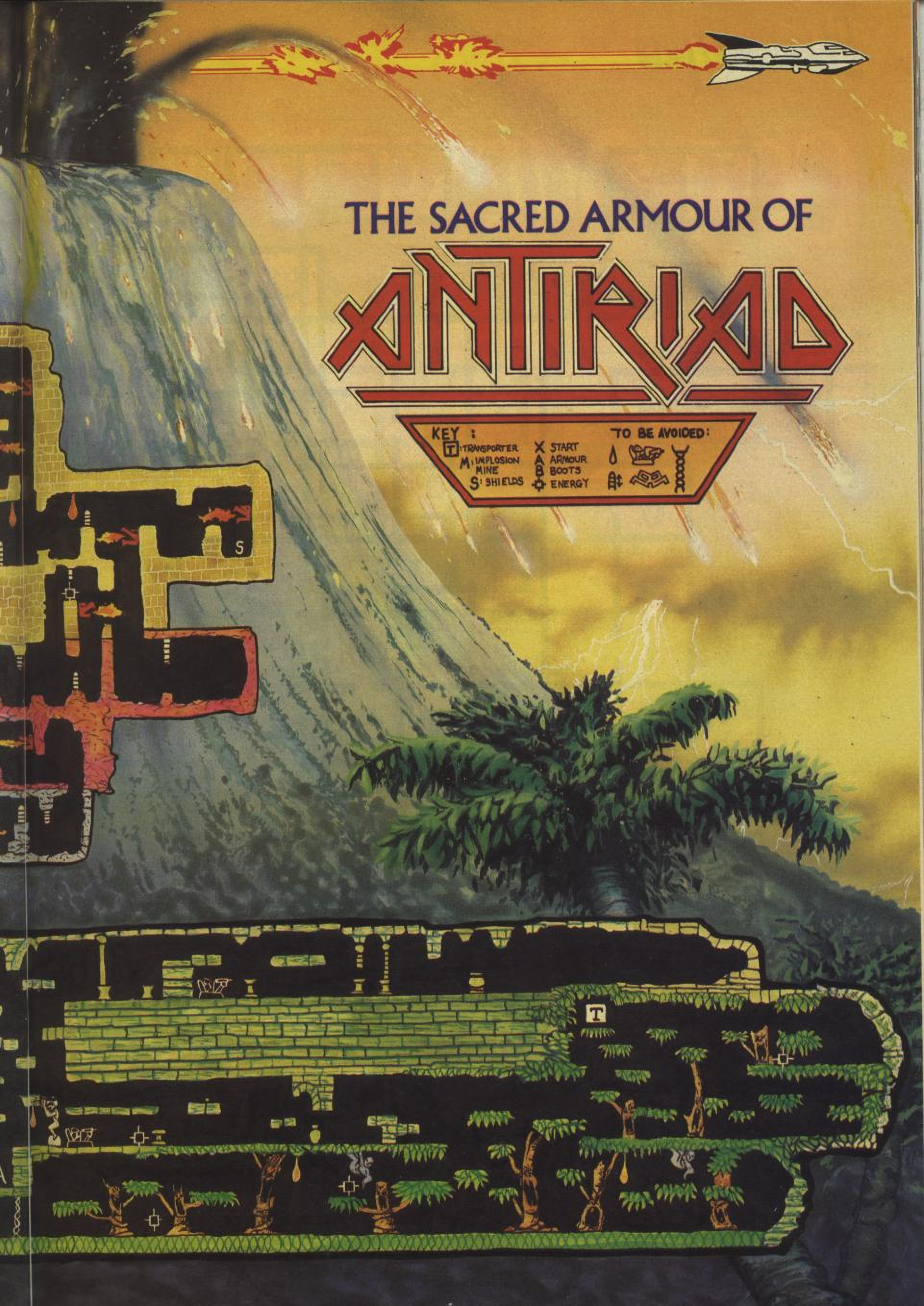
As there are so many, I haven't had time to test them all, so don't complain to me if the odd one or two don't work as they should – it was either eat, drink and sleep for a few days or check this mountain out. I think I made the right choice – and besides, most of the games here are buried so deep in dust and grime that I can't get at them.

Robert wins last month's WANTED competition and all of this month's Smashes will soon be winging their way to him. Hope there are plenty!

TITLE	POKE	RESULT
SCUBA DIVE	55711,255	255 Lives
HORACE GOES SKIING	29270,0	No Traffic
MANIC MINER	35136, 0	Infinite Lives
HUNCH BACK	26888,0	Infinite Lives
AH DIDDUMS	24942,255	255 Lives
PROJECT FUTURE	27662,0	Removes aliens
PSYTRON	28625,0	Endless Fuel
PSYTRON	26143,255	Endless Oxygen
PSYTRON	26144,0	Endless Oxygen
PYRAMID	44685,0	Endless Energy
ARCADIA	25776,0	Infinite lives
ZIP ZAP	53753,0	Infinite lives
KOKOTONI WILF	42214,255	255 lives
MOON ALERT	42404,255	100 lives
ZZOOM	24743,0	Infinite lives
FREEZE BEEZ	34610,0	Infinite Lives
FRANK N STEIN	28277,100	100 lives.
WILD WEST HERO	23821,30	30 lives
MONTY MOLE	35874,255	Fall without dying
MONTY MOLE	38004,0	Infinite lives
ESKIMO EDDIE	24686,24	Infinite Lives
ESKIMO EDDIE	24687,76	Infinite lives
LAZY JONES	56693,0	Infinite lives
KOSMIC KANGA	36212,0	Infinite lives
ANDROID	52250,32	Infinite lives
MUTANT MONTY	54933,0	256 lives
RIVER RESCUE	33420,0	Infinite lives
ZAXXON	48825,250	255 lives
GILLIGANS GOLD	52881,0	Infinite lives
FINDERS KEEPERS	34252,0	Infinite lives
CHILLER	34025,0	Infinite lives
TIR NA NOG	34202,200	No Sidhe
MUGSY	43012,0	Infinite lives
JACK/BEANSTALK	56110,0	Infinite lives
DEFENDA	37531,0	Infinite Lives
DEFENDA	34163,0	Infinite smart bombs
HALLS OF THINGS	32717,0	Infinite energy
PUD PUD	49287,0	Infinite Pud Puds
AD ASTRA	28592,0	Increased fire power
AD ASTRA	35852,0	Infinite lives

PLAYING TIPS EXTRA




THE SACRED ARMOUR OF
ANTIRIAD
KEY :
T: TRANSPORTER
M: IMPLOSION MINE
S: SHIELDS
X START
A ARMOUR
B BOOTS
ENERGY
TO BE AVOIDED:
S
T

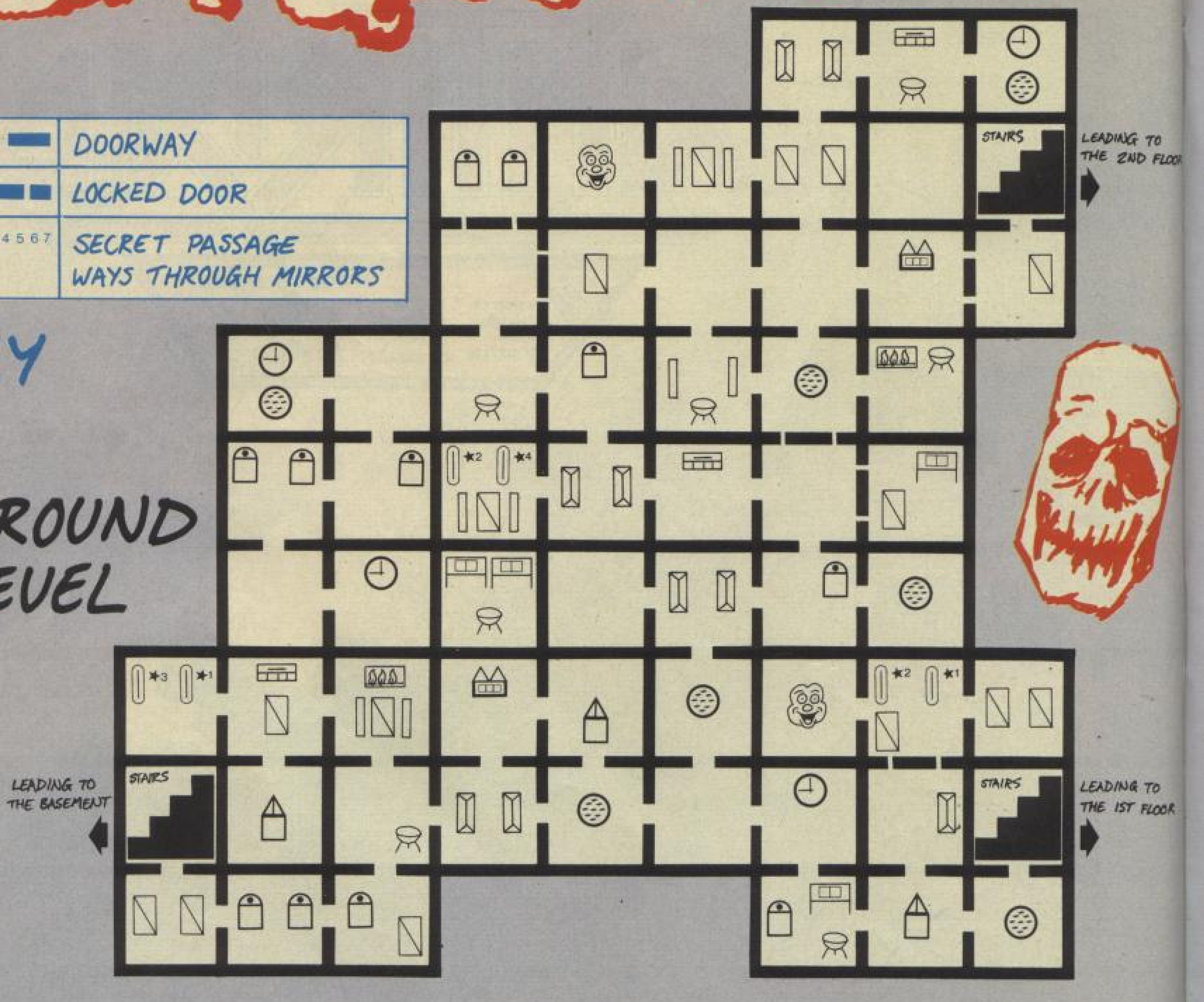
PLAYING TIPS EXTRA

CON-QUEST

KEY

▬ ▬	DOORWAY
▬▬▬	LOCKED DOOR
★1 2 3 4 5 6 7	SECRET PASSAGE WAYS THROUGH MIRRORS

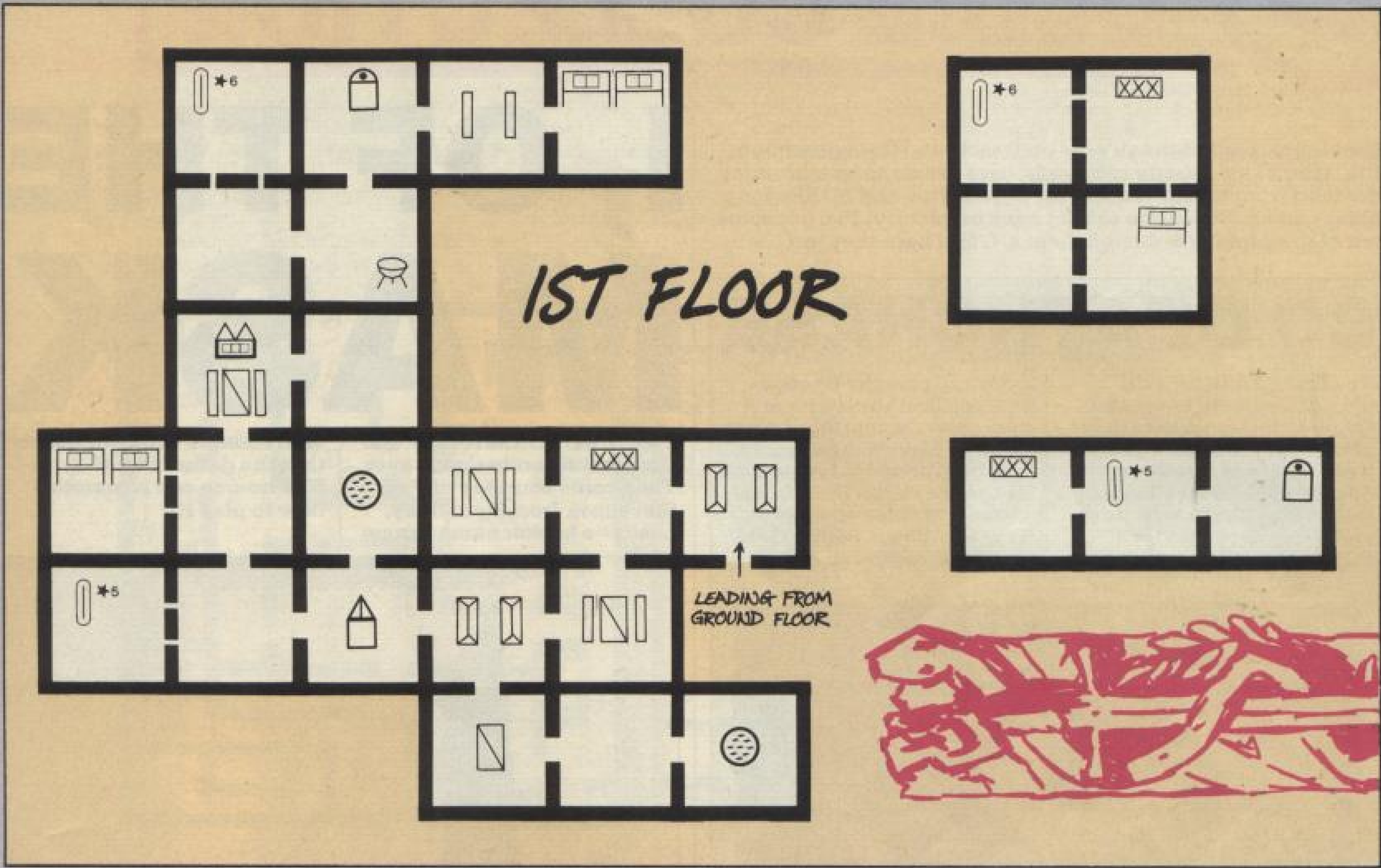
GROUND LEVEL

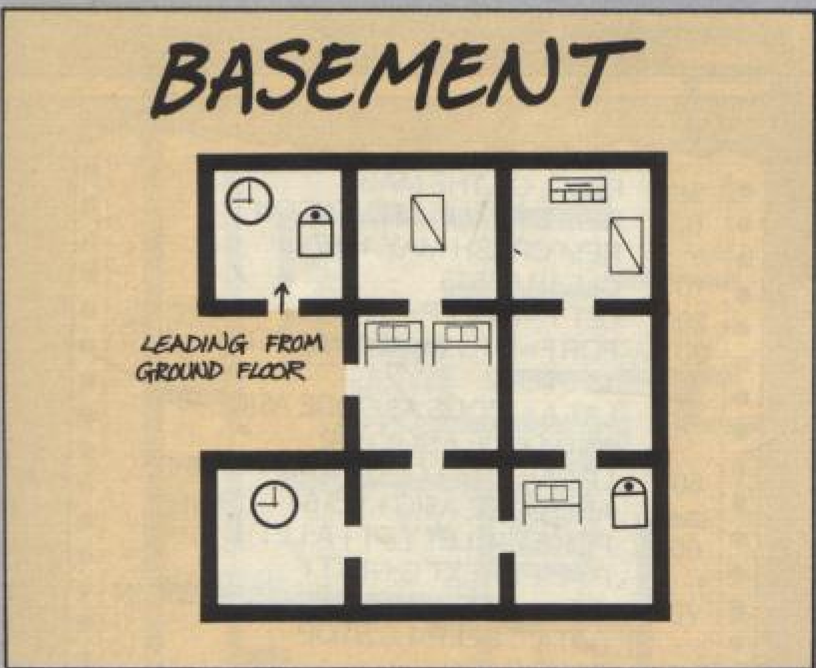


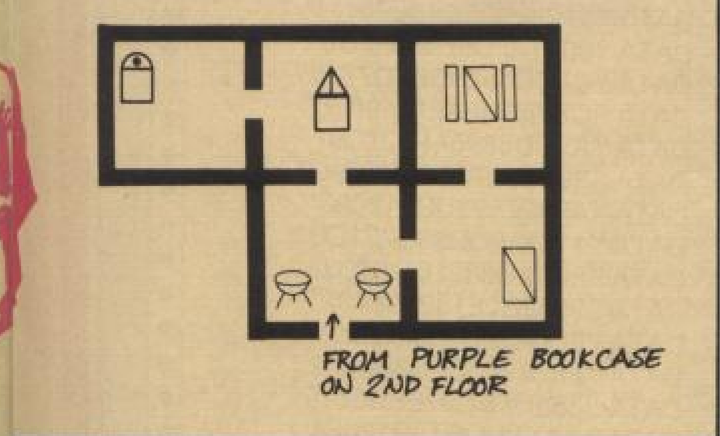
2ND FLOOR



COMPILED BY B. SWINSLOE







KEY

	TREASURE CHEST
	CLOCK
	FOUNTAIN
	MIRROR
	TABLE
	BENCH
	IDOL OF A GOD
	CABINET
	MONEY MACHINE
	BOOK-CASE
	LONG BOX
	FIREPLACE
	CAULDRON
	STATUE OF A LADY ON A BENCH
	GRILL DOOR

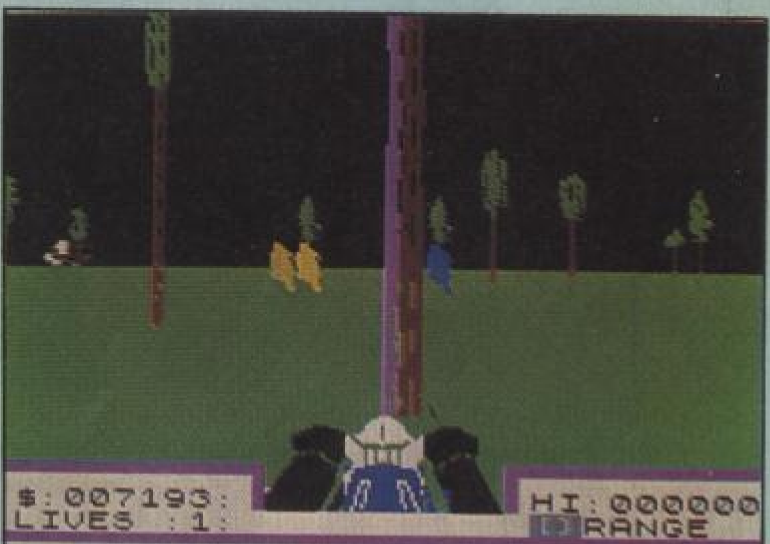
2 THE GREAT GOLDEN OLDIE COLLECTION

Looking through Hannah's old mail sack, and through some of the letters I've already received, there seems to be a growing demand from newer readers for cheats, tips and POKEs for older games. Never one to hold back on history, I've got some out of the cupboard, dusted them off, and here they are . . .

3D DEATHCHASE

The first CRASH Smash, unimaginatively known as Game of the Month then (have you noticed that C&VG still have . . .), was *Deathchase* and it does appear rather silly that you've had to wait three-and-a-quarter years for a POKE to this beauty.

Simply play the *Deathchase* tape past the loader and then enter the routine and let the tape play on. You should now be gifted with invincibility thanks to Tim Deily from Victoria in Australia. Tie m' Kangeroo down, Sport; Tie m' Kangeroo down . . .




```
5    REM DEATHCHASE
6    REM TIM DEILY
7    REM CRASH MAY 1987
10   FOR G=32740 TO 32758:READ A:POKE
     G,A:NEXT G
20   RANDOMIZE USR 32740
30   DATA 62,255,55,17,72,63
40   DATA 221,33,0,64, 205, 86
50   DATA 5,62,0,50,95,103,201
```

WIMPY 'N' EGGS

Two quick classics from P Clough who lives in Durham. Firstly Ocean's *Mr Wimpy* . . .

Enter these POKEs before the RANDOMIZE USR statement in the loader. The first misses out the initial screen, and the second provides Mr Wimpy with infinite lives.

POKE 33501,0
POKE 336930,0

Secondly, P has discovered a simple way of getting through *Chuckie Egg*'s security code. Before loading enter the following:

MERGE "": POKE 24501,195: GOTO 1

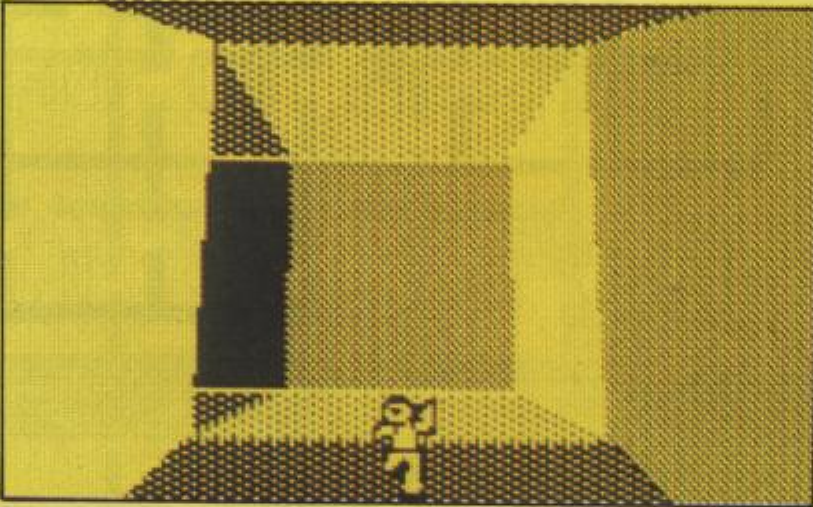
then begin loading . . . When the OK message appears enter:

POKE 42873,0: RANDOMIZE USR 42000

an endless supply of lives should, fingers crossed, now be yours.

I, OF THE MASK

Yes, siree! POKEs for Electric Dreams' second release ever. They come courtesy of Paul Stevenson from Roundhay, Leeds – a hacker name I know well enough. Only problem is that the game is so W-E-I-R-D that no-one can remember how to play it!

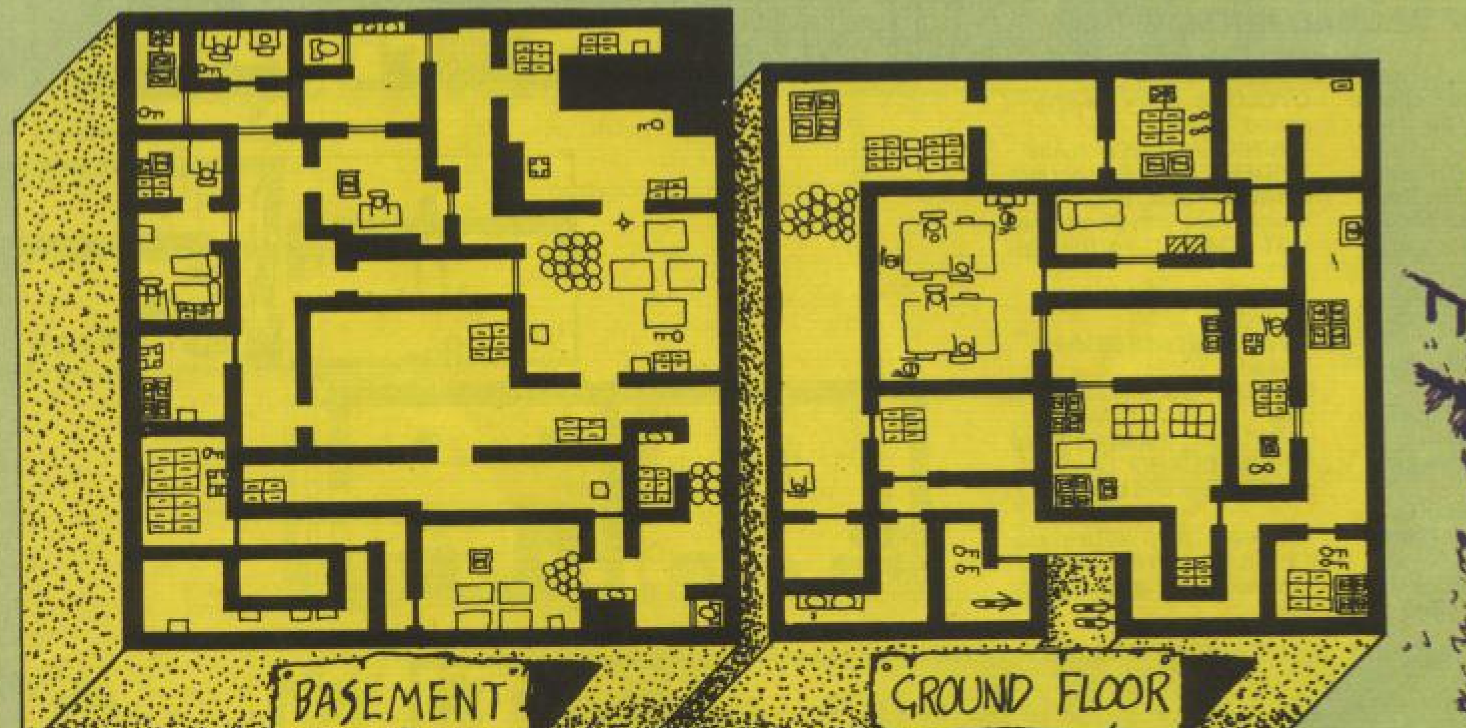


```
5    REM I, OF THE MASK
6    REM BY PAUL STEVENSON
7    REM CRASH MAY 1987
10   CLEAR 65535
20   LET T=0:LET P=38100
30   FOR F=1 TO 14:READ A$:FOR G=1 TO
     15 STEP 2
40   LET A= CODE A$ CODE A$(G)-48-(7
     AND CODE A$(G)>64)
50   LET A=A*16+CODE A$(G+1)-48-(7
     AND CODE A$(G+1)>64
60   POKE P,A:LET T=T+A:LET
     P=P+1:NEXT G:NEXT F
70   IF T<>13277 THEN PRINT "ERROR IN
     DATA": BEEP 1,0:STOP
75   POKE P,201
80   PRINT # 0;AT 0,3;"START I, OF THE
     MASK TAPE";AT 15,0
90   RANDOMIZE USR 38100
500  DATA "312896DD21359611"
510  DATA "9001AFD6F908F3D5"
520  DATA "CD6C05C130ED7723"
530  DATA "CB7C28FA21359616"
540  DATA "A5CD3895AF327C97"
550  DATA "3EC3327596CD5896"
560  DATA "AF327596DD218093"
570  DATA "118238CD3D9721CB"
580  DATA "5C01C83216B1CD38"
590  DATA "9532B5E13203E432"
600  DATA "2D843EC932B08231"
610  DATA "E8742A3D5C36D032"
620  DATA "365CFBC97EED677E"
630  DATA "AA77230B78B120F4"
```

INTO THE EAGLE'S NEST

These following tips from Rajvinder Johal, **who lives in Derby, neatly accompany our map of *Into the Eagle's Nest***

- Don't pick up ammunition if your gun is full – it's a waste.
- If you are healthy, but have ten hits or below, take the food instead of a Red Cross parcel which should only be used when seriously injured.
- Never shoot more times than you need to. Blazing away in all directions may lead to detonating some explosives.
- To complete the game and blow up the castle, set the detonators on all eight floors and return to the place where you started.
- To rescue the captives ensure the game is on level two, three or four and go up through the levels until you find one. He looks similar to you but doesn't possess a gun. When a captive is found return him to the start position on the ground floor and go for the others.
- If one of the rescued captives blocks you into a corner shoot at him and he should move.
- Use barrels and other objects for cover when attacking the enemy.



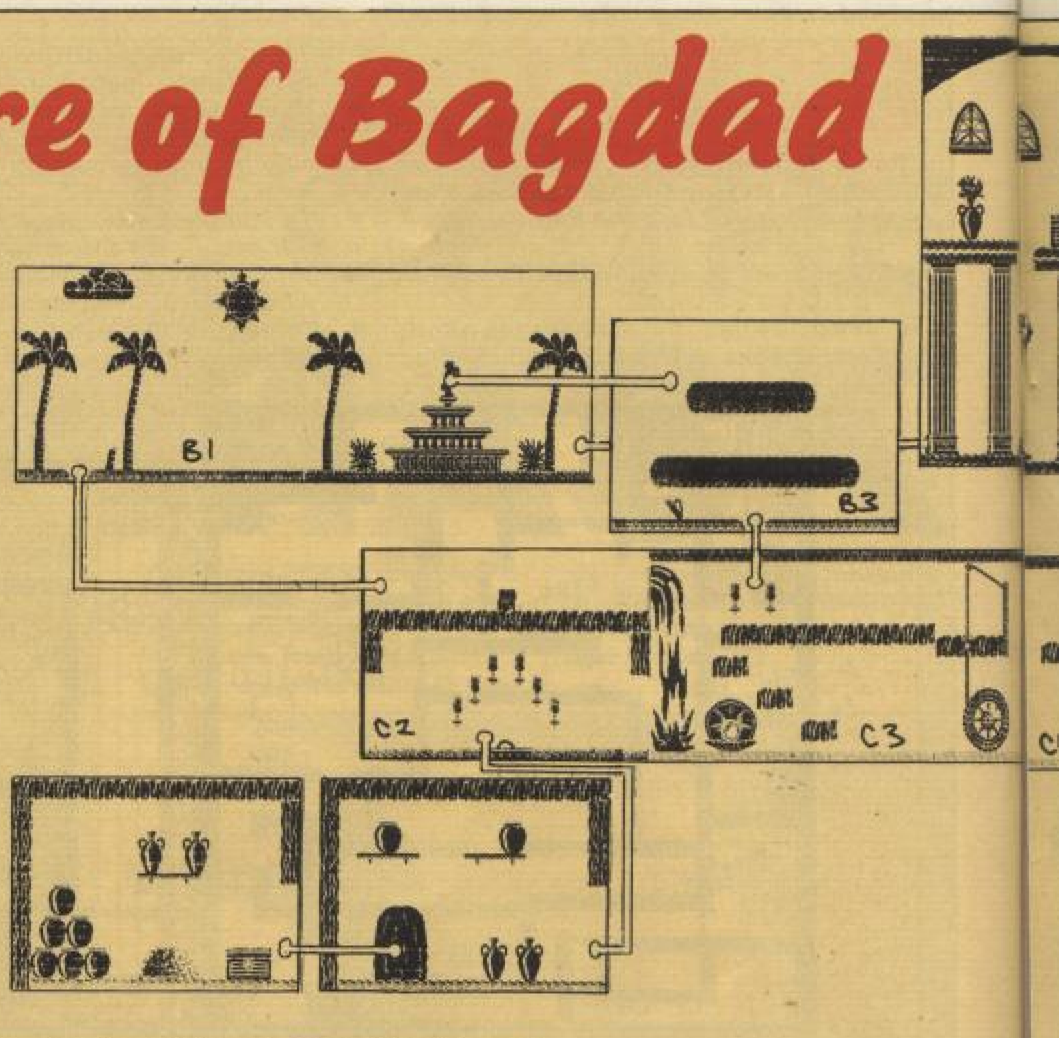


MAPPED BY RAJVINDER JOHAL

- EXPLOSIVES – NEVER SHOOT THESE – OR #*$!
- AMMO GOOD FOR YOUR GUN
- KEY
- FIRST AID – REDUCES HITS TO Ø
- FOOD – REDUCES HITS BY 10
- PAINTING, PENDANT, VASE – TREASURE
- BARRELS – CAN BE SHOT OUT OF THE WAY
- STEEL DOOR – NEEDS KEY
- WOODEN DOOR – CAN BE SHOT OPEN
- OFFICIAL AT DESK SHOOT FOR POINTS
- TOILETS
- DETONATOR – SHOOT TO PRIME
- BED
- BOX – SHOOT OPEN: MAY CONTAIN GEMS OR EXPLOSIVES



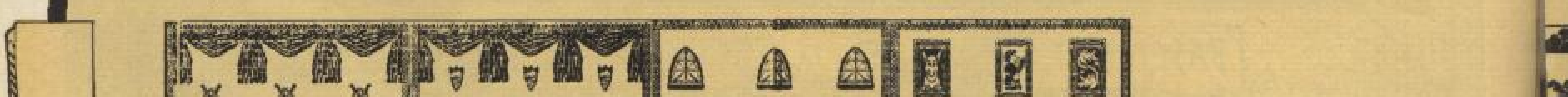
The Sceptre of Bagdad map



SCEPTRE OF BAGDAD HINTS

MEDUSA: Carry the Mirror
DESERT: Carry the Coconut
COCONUT: Carry the Loaded Sling
PEARL: Carry the Trident
SLING: Load with the Pearl
STATUE: Walk with Wings
PILE OF ROPE: Carry the Flute
BEE: Catch with Insect Net
WARDROBE: Carry with Keys
DESERT WELL: Carry the Fish Helmet
TRAP DOOR: Carry the Fire Ring
STONE DOOR: Carry the Book
PURSE: Fill with Pile of Coins
WIZARDS SMOKE: Carry the Whisk (Fan)
BULL: Carry the Whip
SHOPS: Carry the Filled Purse
CYCLOPS: Carry the Sharpened Trunk
TRUNK: Sharpen with Axe
SPIDER: Carry full Insect Net
DRAWBRIDGE: Replace Broken Axle with Good One
HOT COALS: Carry the Slippers
SWORD: Cut Spider's Thread
BOW: String with Spider's Thread
QUIVER: Needed to Load Bow
LADY: Carry the Miner's Hat
SPRING BOARD: Carry Loaded Bow and Lamp

The Magic Lamp will help you if you rub it with the hanky. Take not of the handy cryptic clues.

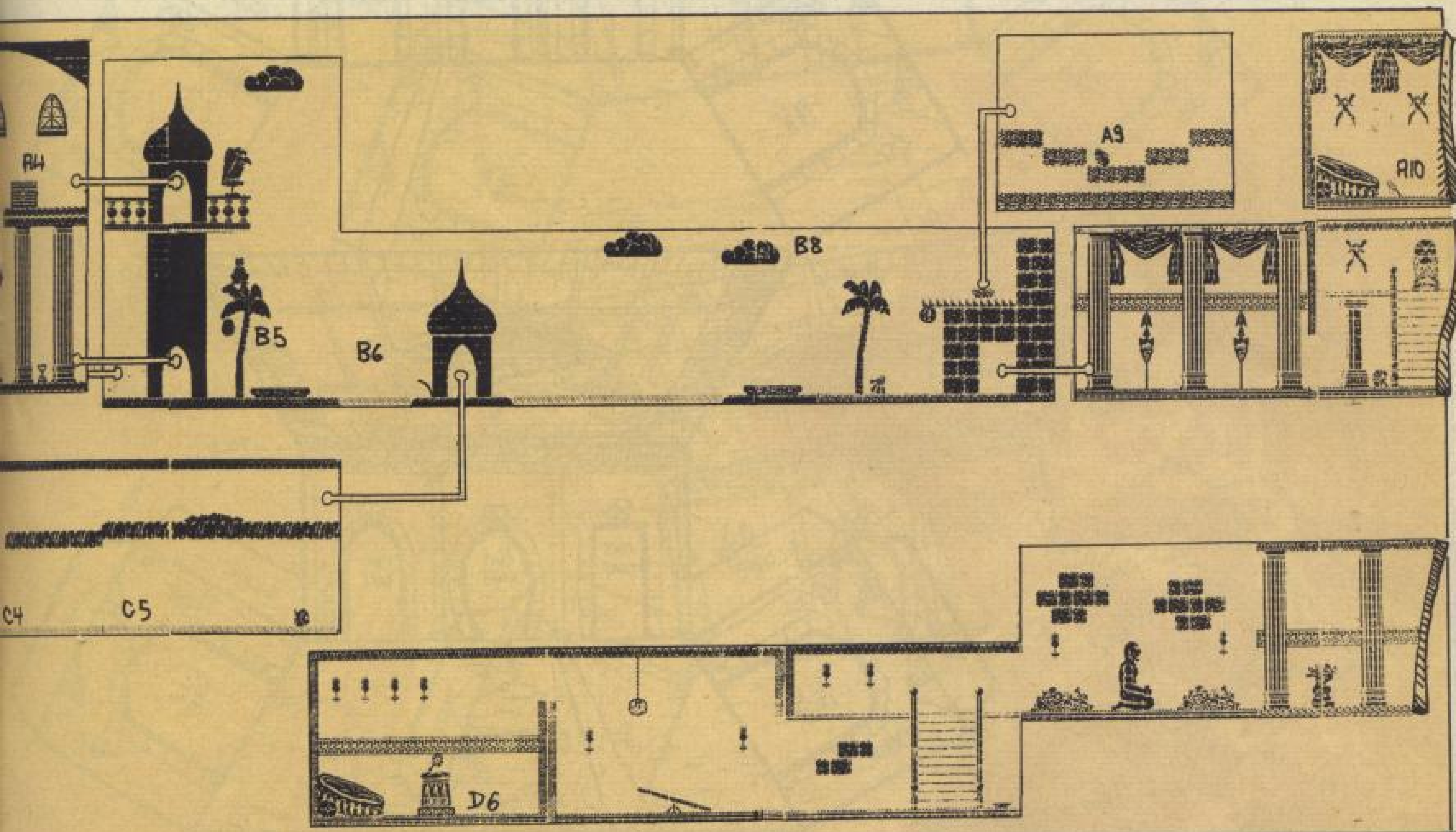


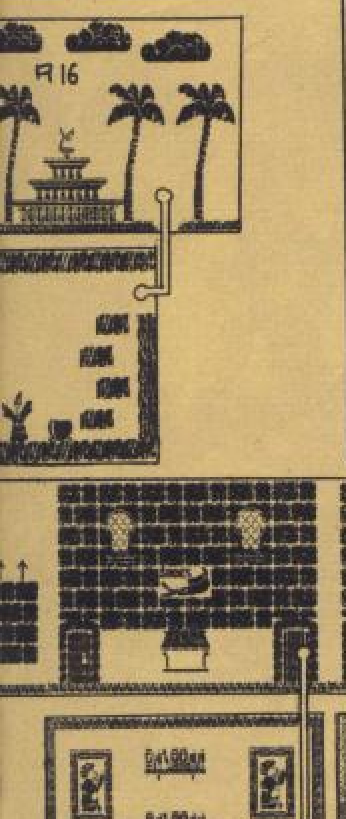
SPACE HARRIER

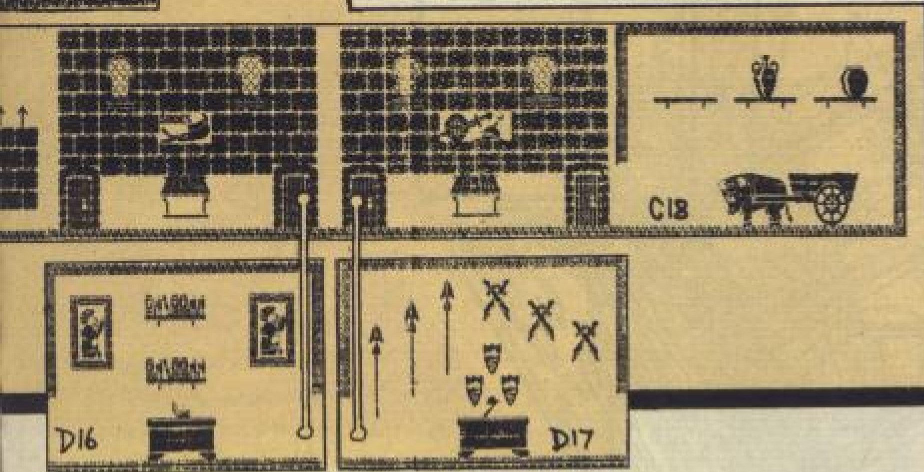
We printed some POKEs for *Space Harrier* a while back, but unfortunately, it seems they didn't work too well. So here's another stab at it, thanks to Steven Payne **from Putney, London.**

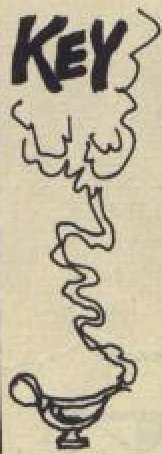
```
10  REM SPACE HARRIER
11  REM BY STEVEN PAYNE
12  REM CRASH MAY 1987
20  CLEAR 64000: LOAD"" CODE
30  POKE 65289,196: POKE 65293,193
40  POKE 65449,178:POKE 65450,143
50  FOR N=65488 TO 65494:READ A: POKE
    N,A:NEXT N
60  RANDMIZE USR 65224
70  DATA 33,194,191,34,43,202,201
```



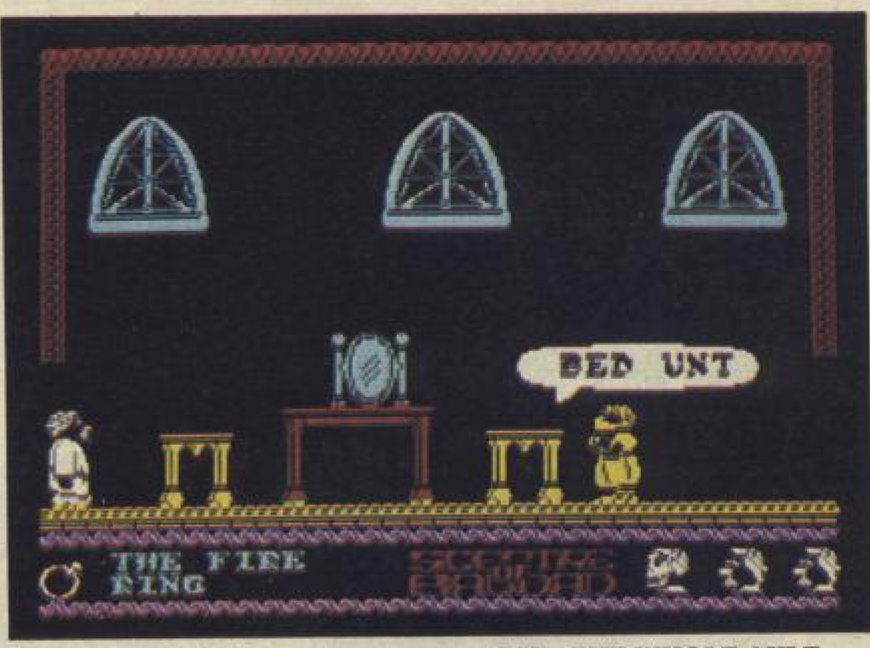








A4 – THE FEATHER
A9 – THE WINGS
A10 – THE INSECT NET
A11 – THE FIRE RING
A13 – THE PURSE EMPTY
A16 – THE SLING
B1 – THE TRUNK BLUNT
B3 – THE QUIVER
B4 – THE HOUR GLASS
B5 – THE COCONUT
B6 – THE BOW UNSTRUNG
B8 – THE KEYS
B11 – THE TRIDENT
B12 – THE SWORD
B13 – THE FLUTE
B14 – THE WHIP



B15 – THE LAMP
C2 – THE MIRROR
C3 – THE PEARL
C4 – THE BAD AXLE
C5 – THE FISH HELMET
C13 – THE ALI-BABA BOOK
C18 – THE WHOLE AXLE
D6 – THE SCEPTRE
D11 – THE ARMOUR
D12 – THE CARPET
D16 – THE SLIPPERS
D17 – THE AXE

FOOTBALL FORTUNES

Not so much a tip, more a way of saving from **Javid Karim** of Royston, Herts. When you have decided to finish the game return to the normal menu screen. press break and type SAVE "FILENAME" and save it to a blank tape. Remember to make a note of of all the players men, money and immunity cards. The next time you wish to play, simply load in the saved version and type GOTO 60. The program then begins from where it left off.

STARGLIDER

Both Matthew Bauer **from Whitworth in Lancs, and** Robert Gabriel **from Devon both sent in this tip – on the same day. However,** Phil Churchyard **told me a few days before . . .**

Play the game until you enter the high score table, and when asked to enter your initials, type 'GBIO RGS' – in caps – and with the space.

Now, start the game and pause it, then while it's in pause mode press any of these keys . . .

1 takes you forward to the next level.
2 puts you in indestructible mode.
3 takes you out of indestructible mode.
4 provides you with two missiles.

OUR VERY FIRST 3D MAP

DRAGON'S LAIR



TO ASSEMBLE YOUR 3D-MAP:

1. REMOVE PAGES AND GLUE TO A SHEET OF THIN CARD
2. CUT OUT THE SIX SHAPES
3. CUT OUT INSIDES OF DOORS
4. FOLD AS SHOWN ON RIGHT AND GLUE

MAP DEVISED BY GARY PENN !!



MORE BITS ON PAGE 77

DON'T GET SINGED!



DRAGON'S LAIR PART II CHEAT

If you've been experiencing problems with Software Projects' follow up to *Dragon's Lair* then try this simple little tip from Mr Software Projects himself, **Paul Patterson**.

Just load up the game, and before pressing the Space key to start, hold down the Q,W,E,R,T keys – and before you can say 'Software Projects are the best of the lot' you'll be graced with infinite lives. Was that plug okay Paul?



DRAGON'S LAIR POKE

Regular CRASH hacker, **Phil Churchyard**, has been at it again and provides an 'interesting' hack for the original *Dragon's Lair* game. It completes the first screen for you and makes others easy – it does a lot more besides, but you'll just have to use it to find out exactly what.

```
10 REM DRAGON'S LAIR CHEAT
20 REM BY PHIL CHURCHYARD
30 REM CRASH MAY 1987
40 LET A$="MAKE IT EASY"
50 FOR I=1 TO 9: POKE 32767+I,A$ "I":NEXT I
60 LOAD ""
```

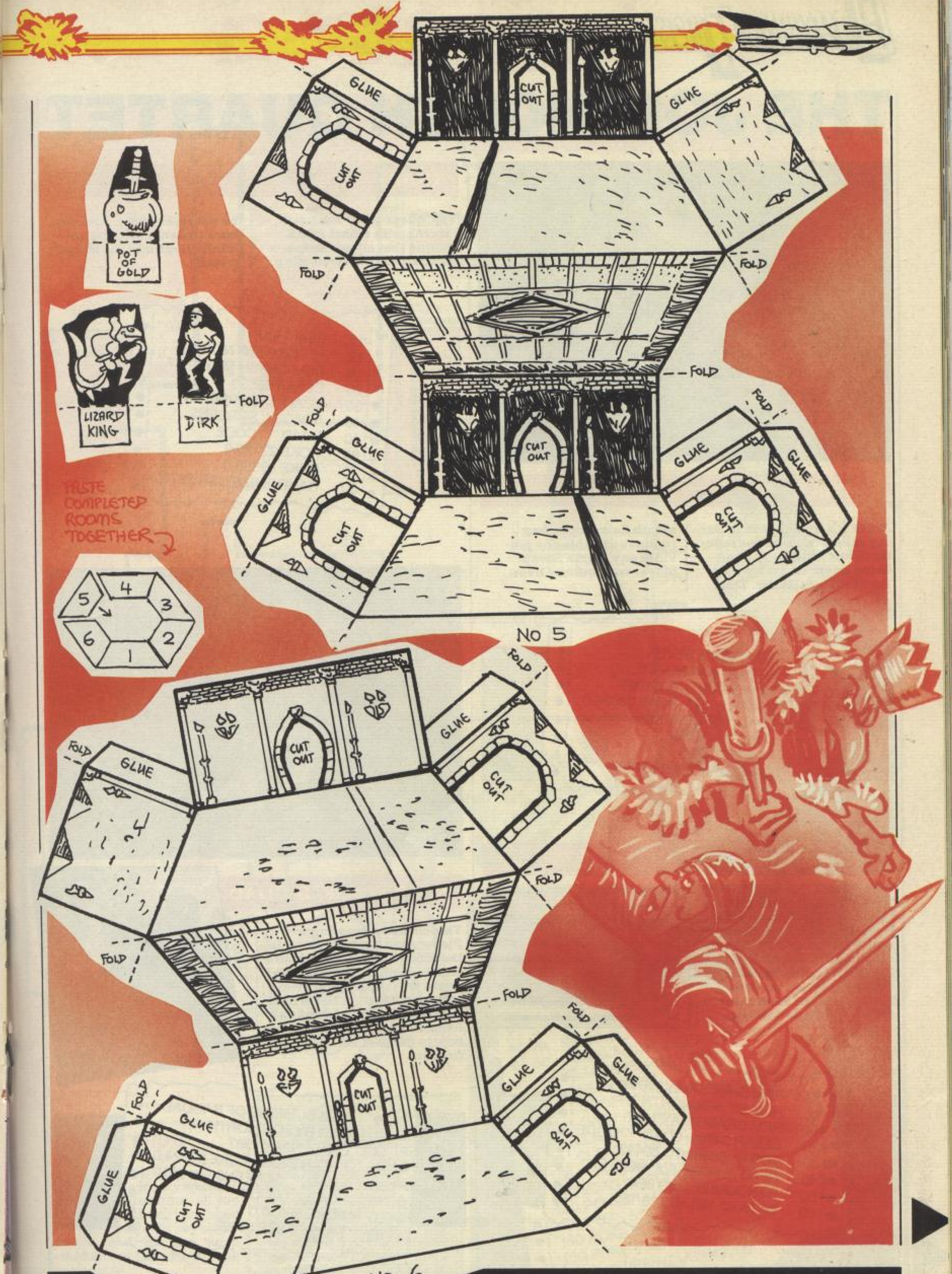
And from **Ashley Harrison**, Mansfield, comes a quick tipette. On the first disk, when the wind blows, press all four directional keys at once and Dirk should move the right way without falling off.



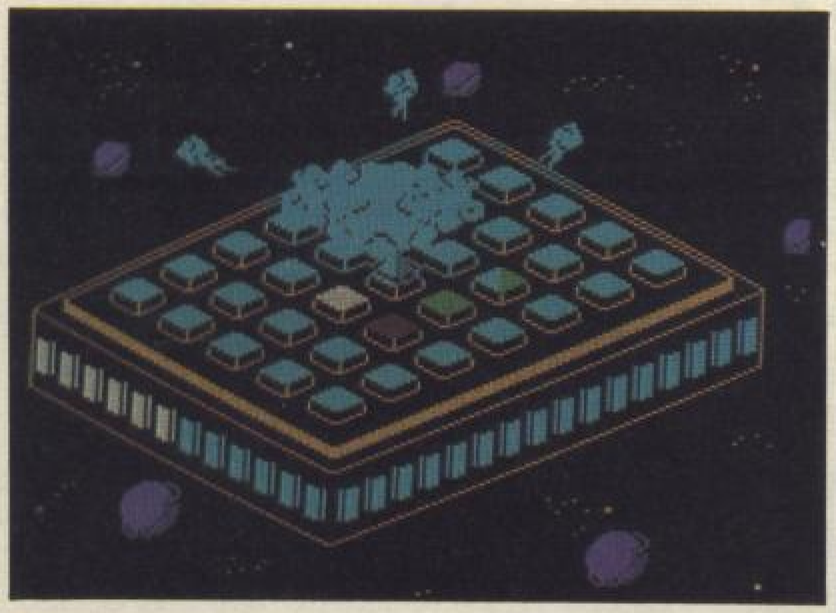
THRUST II

There's a rather helpful bug in Firebird's *Thrust II* as discovered by **Pierre Scotney** from Bristol – a city near France, judging by his christian name . . .

When you've collected an orb from the surface of the planet, fly back to the empty pylon and press the pick up key. You should now have another orb! Deposit it and you finish the game in next to no time.


GLUE
CUT OUT
GLUE
CUT OUT
GLUE
POT OF GOLD
FOLD
FOLD
LIZARD KING
DIRK
FOLD
FOLD
FOLD
FOLD
GLUE
GLUE
GLUE
GLUE
CUT OUT
CUT OUT
CUT OUT
PASTE COMPLETED ROOMS TOGETHER
4
5
3
6
2
1
No 5
FOLD
GLUE
GLUE
CUT OUT
CUT OUT
FOLD
FOLD
FOLD
FOLD
FOLD
GLUE
GLUE
GLUE
GLUE
CUT OUT
CUT OUT
CUT OUT
NO. 6

THE JON NORTH QUARTET



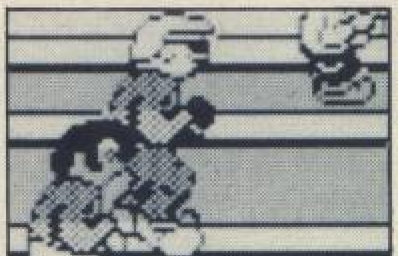
SIGMA SEVEN

Jon North from Sutton in Surrey, is becoming quite a regular tipster, and looks like being a serious foe for the Hackers from Haxby. This month he's sent in four routines and this one provides any Sigma Seven player with infinite lives.

```
10 REM SIGMA SEVEN
12 REM BY JON NORTH
14 REM CRASH MAY 1987
20 CLEAR 25067: POKE 23624,0
30 LOAD "" SCREEN$
40 LOAD "" CODE
50 POKE 60399,0
60 RANDOMIZE USR 61385
```

SHOCKWAY RIDER

Now, I'm only printing this as I trust Jon North implicitly. Someone, who shall remain nameless, nicked the library copy of *Shockway Rider*, so I wasn't able to test it out. Now you wouldn't let me down, would you Jon? So, cross your fingers and hope it works . . .



```
10 REM SHOCKWAY RIDER
12 REM BY JON NORTH
14 REM CRASH MAY 1987
20 CLEAR 24799: LOAD "" CODE
30 FOR F=60408 TO 60412
40 READ A: POKE F,A: NEXT F
50 RANDOMIZE USR 6E4
60 DATA 62,183,50,139,180
```

TRAP

Yep, guess who? Jon North returns with a neat POKE routine that allows access to any ship without collecting the necessary orbs. And yes, there's even more, you get infinite lives into the bargain as well!

```
10 REM TRAP
12 REM BY JON NORTH
14 REM CRASH MAY 1987
20 CLEAR 65530
30 LOAD "" SCREEN$
40 LOAD "" SCREEN$
50 LOAD "" CODE
60 POKE 27126,0
70 POKE 39558,0
80 RANDOMIZE USR 38700
```

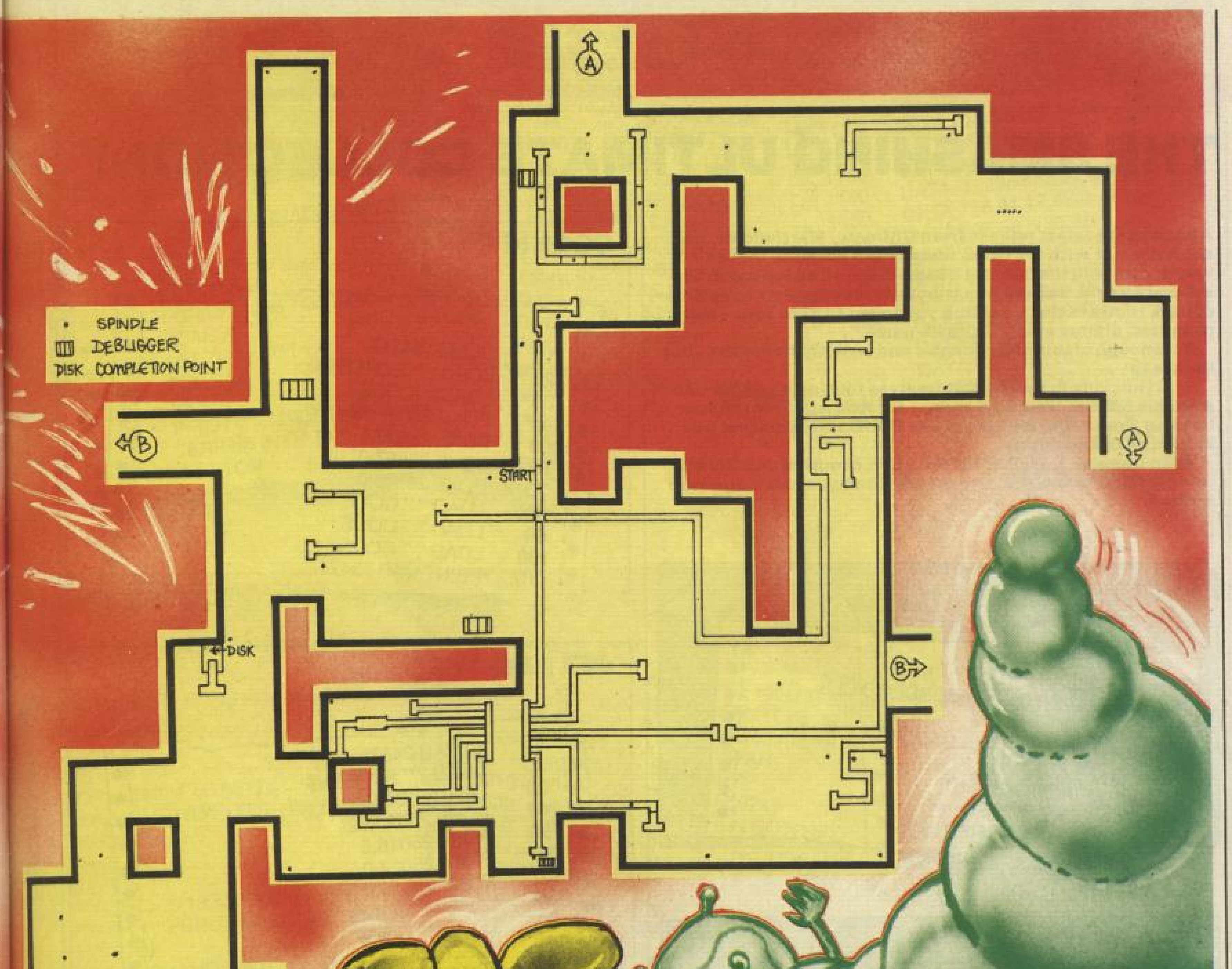


SCEPTRE OF BAGDAD



This cheap release from Players has kept everyone in the office into the early hours battling with its puzzles. No doubt we'll be staying even later now that Jon North has sent us his routine for infinite lives. But we still don't know how to get past that damned Gorgon.

```
10 REM SCEPTRE OF BAGDAD
12 REM BY JON NORTH
14 CRASH MAY 1987
20 CLEAR 24063: POKE 23624,0
30 LOAD "" SCREEN$
40 LOAD "" CODE
50 POKE 59858,0
60 RANDOMIZE 58002
```





NEMESIS POKES

And yet more from the Industrious Hackers from Haxby – industrious indeed! This one gives your ship invulnerability and infinite lives And by the way, Derrick, I will try and sort out that screen dump for you.

```
10 REM NEMESIS POKES
20 REM INDUSTRIOUS HACKERS
30 REM C.SMITH, J.BEAN, D.AUSTIN
40 REM CRASH MAY 1987
50 CLEAR 24999
60 BORDER 0:PAPER 0: INK 0: CLS
70 LOAD "" CODE 16384
80 LOAD "" CODE 25000
90 CLEAR 65500
100 POKE 23607,112
110 LOAD "" CODE 24387
120 POKE 51478,0
130 POKE 51479,0
140 POKE 51480,0
150 POKE 51481,0
160 INK 7:PRINT USR 49700
```

BREAKTHRU

Tips from **Paul Gilliland** . . . If anybody actually wants to complete *Breakthru*, all you have to do is keep your hand on the the SPACE key all the while, and you can jump throughout the whole game – that's it!

SIR FRED

John Grandin from Sale in Cheshire has found 'a brilliant new cheat', to quote: Just get to the cloud with the handle and if you can time it right, you should land near the drawbridge. Walk through it and the Princess greets you with open arms. Ahhh!

3 THE GREAT GOLDEN OLDIE COLLECTION

THE SMASHING ULTIMATE COLLECTION!

Although the latest release from Ultimate, *Martianoids*, has not been met with the usual resounding acclaim, there's no way of escaping the fact that Ultimate are a firm legend in the software world. So here, as a tribute, is the complete collection of hack routines that enabling you to get further into – and complete, almost every Ultimate game.

But enough of this merry banter and on with the credits – our thanks to . . .

Paul Hutchinson **for his infinite lives routine on *Lunar Jetman*, his infinite lives and energy for *Atic Atac*, for infinite lives on *Tranz-Am*, for his *Jet Pac* POKE and (a marvel this kid!) his *Cookie* routine.**

Then there'sK R Walker **for his *Alien 8* routine and** Robert Gabriel **for his super *Pentagram* infinite lives and mega-leap routine.**

LUNAR JETMAN

```
10 CLEAR 24575
20 PAPER 0:INK 0:BORDER 0:CLS
30 FOR L=1 TO 5
40 PRINT AT 6,0;:LOAD "" CODE
50 NEXT L
60 POKE 23439,201
70 POKE 36965,0
80 RANDMIZE USR 32768
```

ATIC ATAC

```
10 LOAD "" SCREEN$
20 LOAD "" CODE:LOAD "" CODE:LOAD
   "" CODE
30 POKE 36519,0
40 POKE 35353,0
50 POKE 39092,92
60 PRINT USR 23424
```

TRANZ-AM

```
10 CLEAR 24319
20 LOAD "" SCREEN$
30 LOAD""CODE
40 POKE 25446,0
50 LOAD "" CODE
60 LOAD "" CODE
70 LOAD "" CODE
80 PRINT USR 23424
```

COOKIE

```
10 CLEAR 24319
20 LOAD "" SCREEN$
30 LOAD""CODE
40 POKE 28695,62
50 POKE 28696,5
60 POKE 28697,0
70 POKE 28698,0
80 LOAD "" CODE
90 LOAD "" CODE
100 LOAD "" CODE
110 PRINT USR 23424
```

JET PAC

```
10 CLEAR 24575
20 LOAD "" SCREEN$
30 LOAD""CODE
40 POKE 25015,62
50 POKE 25016,5
60 POKE 25017,0
70 POKE 25018,0
80 LOAD "" CODE
90 LOAD "" CODE
100 LOAD "" CODE
110 PRINT USR 24576
```

NIGHTSHADE

Infinite lives.

```
5 REM NIGHT POKES
10 BORDER 0:PAPER 0:INK 0:CLS
20 PRINT AT 9,1;INK 7;"PLAY IN NIGHT-
   SHADE MASTER TAPE"; AT
   11,9;"FROM THE START"
30 FOR N=1 TO 5
40 PRINT AT 19,0:LOAD "" CODE
50 NEXT N
60 POKE 52660,240
70 POKE 52661,224
80 POKE 52700,176
90 POKE 52701,176
100 POKE 52730,160
110 POKE 52731,240
120 POKE 52732,7
130 POKE 52733,4
140 PRINT USR 23424
```

NIGHTSHADE

This set of pokes gets rid of the nasties, except for the four main creatures and the fireball.

```
1    REM NIGHTSHADE POKES
5    CLS
10   RESTORE
20   LET TOT=0
30   FOR I=23296 TO 23430
40   READ A
50   LET TOT=TOT+A
60   POKE I,A
70   NEXT I
80   IF TOT<>12907 THEN PRINT
     "ERROR IN DATA!!!": BEEP 1,
     50: STOP
90   PRINT AT 0,0;"START NIGHTSHADE
     TAPE.ANY KEY . . . ":PAUSE 1:
     PAUSE 0
100  RANDOMIZE USR 23296
1000 DATA 49,255,255,175,211
1010 DATA 254,33,0,64,17
1020 DATA 1,64,54,0,1
1030 DATA 0,27,237,176,205
1040 DATA 122,91,62,255,55
1050 DATA 221,33,0,0,17
1060 DATA 136,19,205,86,5
1070 DATA 205,122,91,62,255
1080 DATA 55,221,33,0,64
1090 DATA 17,0,27,205,86
1100 DATA 5,205,122,91,62
1110 DATA 255,55,221,33,0
1120 DATA 96,17,0,136,205
1130 DATA 86,5,205,122,91
1140 DATA 62,255,55,221,33
1150 DATA 128,91,17,43,0
1160 DATA 205,86,5,33,92
1170 DATA 91,34,169,91,195
1180 DATA 128,91,33,128,91
1190 DATA 17,58,0,205,19
1200 DATA 0,62,233,50,176
1210 DATA 92,38,99,46,52
1220 DATA 243,34,120,92,62
1230 DATA 201,50,232,205,195
1240 DATA 0,94,175,55,221
1250 DATA 33,0,0,17,17
1260 DATA 0,205,86,5,201
```

KNIGHT LORE

```
5    REM KNIGHT LORE POKES
10   CLEAR 65535
20   RESTORE
30   LET TOT=0
40   FOR I=65024 TO 65178
50   READ A:LET TOT=TOT+A+A * PEEK
     (I-65024)
60   POKE I,A
70   NEXT I
80   IF TOT<>2713224 THEN PRINT
     FLASH 1;"ERROR IN DATA!!!":BEEP
     1,0: STOP
100  PRINT "CHANGE INTO WOLF (Y/
     N)?";:GOSUB 500:PRINT K$:IF K$
     ="N" THEN PRINT "YOU ALSO GET
     INFINITE TIME!!!":GOTO 130
110  POKE 65107,58: POKE 65110,58:
     POKE 65113,58
120  PRINT "INFINITE TIME (Y/
     N)?";:GOSUB 500:PRINT K$:IF K$
     ="N" THEN POKE 65099,58
130  PRINT "CAN YOU BE KILLED (Y/
     N)?";:GOSUB 500:PRINT K$: IF
     K$="Y" THEN POKE 65103,58
200  PRINT $1;AT 0,5; "START
     KNIGHTLORE TAPE"
210  RANDOMIZE USR 65024
500  IF INKEY$<>""THEN GOTO 500
510  POKE 23658,8: LET K$=INKEY$:IF
     K$<>"Y" AND K$<>"N"THEN
     GOTO 510
520  RETURN
1000 DATA 33,0,92,17,1
1001 DATA 92,1,0,162,117
1002 DATA 237,176,221,33,0
1003 DATA 0,17,13,4,62
1004 DATA 255,55,205,86,5
1005 DATA 48,229,6,200,118
1006 DATA 16,253,205,103,254
1007 DATA 251,6,100,118,16
1008 DATA 253,49,255,255,33
1009 DATA 0,64,17,0,27
1010 DATA 205,103,254,205,129
1011 DATA 254,33,0,97,17
1012 DATA 0,125,251,6,100
1013 DATA 118,16,253,205,103
1014 DATA 254,205,129,254,175
1015 DATA 50,30,196,175,50
1016 DATA 63,209,175,50,161
1017 DATA 195,50,162,195,50
1018 DATA 163,195,195,0,97
1019 DATA 6,0,167,205,237
1020 DATA 5,208,201,6,25
1021 DATA 118,16,253,243,205
1022 DATA 95,254,120,254,40
1023 DATA 56,248,1,188,2
1024 DATA 11,120,177,32,251
1025 DATA 205,95,254,201,54
1026 DATA 1,205,95,254,205
1027 DATA 95,254,208,120,254
1028 DATA 13,203,22,48,242
1029 DATA 126,47,119,35,27
1030 DATA 122,179,32,231,201
9999 STOP
```

UNDERWURLDE

```
10   LET S=0:RESTORE:FOR Z=1 TO
     65:READ N:LET S=S+N: NEXT Z: IF
     S<>9205 THEN PRINT
     "ERROR":STOP
20   CLEAR 64500: RESTORE
30   FOR Z=64507 TO 64554
40   READ N:POKE Z,N:NEXT Z
50   FOR Z=23296 TO 23312
60   READ N:POKE Z,N:NEXT Z
65   POKE 59375,0
70   RANDOMIZE USR 64532
80   PRINT "START UNDERWURLDE
     TAPE"
90   LOAD ""
100  DATA
     243,245,58,173,96,254,243,32,11,62,
     91,50,173,96,175,50,176,96,237
     ,86,241,255,251,237,77,243,62,251,1,
     1,1,33,0,253,229,209,19,119,2 37,176,
     62,253,237,71,237,94,251,201
110  DATA
     33,9,91,34,214,243,195,166,243,62,
     116,50,117,144,195,242,103
```

GUN FRIGHT

This one's a bit long, but type it in and it turns the town into one of the safest in the Wild West!

```
10   CLEAR 65535
20   RESTORE
30   LET TOT=0
40   FOR I=64000 TO 64 293
50   READ a:LET tot=tot+a+a*PEEK(i-
     64000)
60   POKE i,a
70   NEXT i
80   IF tot<>4342031 THEN PRINT FLASH
     1; "ERROR IN DATA!":BEEP
     1,0:STOP
100  PRINT "Do you want any women (Y/
     N)?";:GOSUB 500: PRINT k$: IF
     k$="Y" THEN POKE 64062,58
     PRINT "Easier fast draw (Y/
     N)?";:GOSUB 500:PRINT K$: IF
     K$="N" THEN POKE 64068,33
190  PRINT AT 0,6;"Start Gunfright Tape"
200  RANDOMIZE USR 64000
500  IF INKEY$<>""THEN GOTO 500
510  POKE 23658,0
520  LET K$=INKEY$: IF K$<> "Y" AND
     K$<> "N" THEN GOTO 520
530  RETURN
1000 DATA 33,182,92,1,58
1001 DATA 0,205,232,25,205
1002 DATA 94,250,33,0,64
1003 DATA 17,1,64,1,255
1004 DATA 26,117,237,176,205
1005 DATA 117,250,205,117,250
1006 DATA 205,117,250,205,0
1007 DATA 94,205,117,250,205
1008 DATA 60,250,205,117,250
1009 DATA 33,72,250,34,162
1010 DATA 91,205,117,250,205
1011 DATA 117,250,195,128,91
1012 DATA 62,201,50,203,184
1013 DATA 33,175,201,34,86
1014 DATA188,201,42,120,92
1015 DATA 229,33,148,250,17
1016 DATA 166,180,1,146,0
1017 DATA 237,176,225,34,120
1018 DATA 92,195,0,94,221
1019 DATA 33,0,91,17,17
1020 DATA 0,175,55,205,86
1021 DATA 5,221,23,0,91
1022 DATA 42,83,92,205,8
1023 DATA 8,201,221,33,232
1024 DATA 253,17,17,0,175
1025 DATA 55,205,86,5,48
1026 DATA 242,221,42,245,253
1027 DATA 237,91,243,253,55
1028 DATA 62,255,205,86,5
1029 DATA 48,240,201,66,85
1030 DATA 70,70,65,76,207
1031 DATA 66,73,76,204,67
1032 DATA 65,78,68,217,77
1033 DATA 65,206,76,76,79
1034 DATA 89,196,77,65,78
1035 DATA 71,82,65,205,68
1036 DATA 69,82,69,203,66
1037 DATA 82,69,87,83,84
1038 DATA 69,210,66,85,84
1039 DATA 67,200,67,65,83
1040 DATA 83,73,68,217,67
1041 DATA 82,65,83,200,83
1042 DATA 77,65,83,72,69
1043 DATA 210,84,72,197,75
1044 DATA 73,68,196,82,79
1045 DATA 71,69,210,75,69
1046 DATA 65,206,79,76,201
1047 DATA 70,82,69,217,87
1048 DATA 73,76,196,87,69
1049 DATA 83,84,69,82,206
1050 DATA 75,76,79,78,68
1051 DATA 73,75,197,80,72
1052 DATA 73,204,76,79,79
1053 DATA 78,69,217,74,69
1054 DATA 84,77,65,206,90
1055 DATA 90,65,208,82,69
1056 DATA 86,73,69,87,69
1057 DATA 210,77,210,67,79
1058 DATA 87,66,79,217
9999
STOP
```

ALIEN 8

First type in this header . . .

```
10   FOR N=30000 TO 30028
20   READ A:POKE N,A:NEXT N
30   PRINT "START RECORDING AND
     PRESS ANY KEY"
40   IF INKEY$=""THEN GOTO 40
50   RANDOMIZE USR 30000
60   DATA
     221,33,60,117,17,17,0,175,205,194,4,2
     01
70   DATA
     0,65,76,73,69,78,32,32,32,32,32,141,5,
     0,128,36,4
```

RUN this and it should save to tape as a false header, then play the *Alien 8* tape until just past the header signal. Load in your false header and then play the *Alien 8* tape. When the OK message appears, enter the five following pokes . . .

```
POKE 24776, 120
POKE 24777, 74
POKE 24778, 108
POKE 24779, 82
POKE 24780, 140
```

CYBERUN

```
10   LOAD "" CODE:RANDOMIZE USR
     24576
20   PAPER 0: PRINT AT 19,0;
30   LOAD "" CODE:
40   POKE 23446,62
50   POKE 23447,175
60   POKE 23448,50
70   POKE 23449,72
80   POKE 23450,141
90   POKE 23451,195
100  POKE 23452,128
110  POKE 23453,92
120  RANDOMIZE USR 23424
```

PENTAGRAM

```
10   REM PENTAGRAM
20   CLEAR 24064
30   LOAD "" CODE:LOAD "" CODE 24064
40   POKE 49917,0:POKE 50751,0:PRINT
     USR 24064
```



DAN DARE POKES

```
5    REM DAN DARE
6    BY THE PANTOM HACKER
7    REM CRASH MAY 1987
10   BORDER 0:INK 0:PAPER
     0:CLS:CLEAR 255
20   RESTORE
25   LET WEIGHT=1
30   LET TOT=0
40   READ A:LET TOT=TOT+A*WEIGHT
45   LET WEIGHT=WEIGHT+1
50   POKE I,A
55   NEXT I
60   PRINT#1;AT 0,6;"START DAN DARE
     TAPE"
     RANDOMIZE USR 23296
70   POKE 65326,201
80   RANDOMIZE USR 65032
90   POKE 47710,201
100  POKE 46885,201
110  POKE 43526,0
120  POKE 42863,0
130  POKE 42111,0
140  RANDOMIZE USR 39000
150  DATA 221,33,171,253,17,9,3
500  DATA 62,255,55,205,86,5
510  DATA 48,241,201
520
```

ARKANOID CHEAT

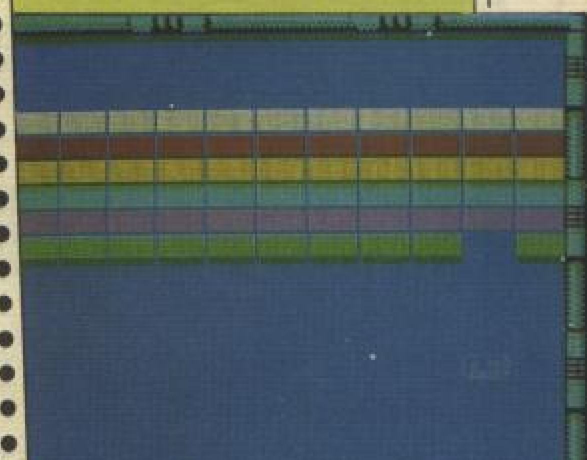
Imagine were not too happy with our review of their Taito conversion *Arkanoid*, last month but like I've always said the marks are personal opinions, not the law. Anyway, unlike some of our reviewers, I liked it. And so did Caleb **from Cherry Hinton and** Mangee Boswell **who both, independently, worked out this rather neat cheat.**

When a high score has been achieved type **PBRAIN** and then start the game as usual. A message **SPACE TO CHEAT** will appear. If Space is pressed within about five seconds, the game starts on the screen on which the player died. If Space isn't pressed the game starts on the first screen as usual.

ARKANOID POKE

Now, you couldn't leave the ever so industrious Hackers from Haxby **out of the playing tips, could you? Hack, no! They've come up with just what I asked for last month – an infinite bats routine so you can play happily through all the levels without a care in the world. Just to remind you, as I haven't mentioned their names for some time, the Hackers from Haxby are** C Smith, Jason Bean **and** Derrick Austin **(Derrick as in the things they have around Dallas and Austin in Texas).**

```
10   REM ARKANOID
20   REM BY THE HACKERS FROM HAXBY
25   CRASH MAY 1987
30   RESTORE
40   CLEAR 65535
50   LET TOT=0:LET W=1
60   FOR F=50000 TO 50158
70   READ A:LET TOT=TOT+W*A
80   POKE F,A:LET W=W+1
90   NEXT F
100  IF TOT <> 1683535 THEN PRINT
     "ERROR IN DATA":BEEP 1,1:STOP
110  PRINT#1;AT 1,6;"START ARKANOID
     TAPE"
120  RANDMOIZE USR 50000
1000 DATA 62,255,55,221,33
1010 DATA 203,92,17,234,6
1020 DATA 205,86,5,48,241
1030 DATA 243,237,94,33,124
1040 DATA 195 229,33,163,98
1050 DATA 229,51,51,17,163
1060 DATA 252,1,12,3,33
1070 DATA 253,94,62,202,237
1080 DATA 79,195,163,98,33
1090 DATA 150,195,229,33,199
1100 DATA 252,229,51,51,17
1110 DATA 209,252,33,209,252
1120 DATA 1,222,2,62,224
1130 DATA 237,79,195,199,252
1140 DATA 33,209,252,17,193
1150 DATA 138,1,92,0,237
1160 DATA 176,33,212,138,34
1170 DATA 217,138,34,221,138
1180 DATA 33,202,138,34,229
1190 DATA 138,33,239,138,34
1200 DATA 249,138,62,195,50
1210 DATA 13,139,33,196,195
1220 DATA 34,14,139,195,193
1230 DATA 138,33,223,195,17
1240 DATA 192,255,1,22,0
1250 DATA 237,176,243,49,255
1260 DATA 255,62,195,50,96
1270 DATA 255,33,192,255,229
1280 DATA 195,59,255,175,50
1290 DATA 16,131,33,0,0
1300 DATA 34,171,131,50,173
1310 DATA 131,195,106,255
```



If you have a Multiface One handy then this may prove simpler. Thanks to Paul Cook **from Southsea for this one . . .**
POKE 33702,0



BUTCH HARD GUY HACK

I've had a couple of *Hard Guy* hacks recently, but I haven't had much success with the actual running of them. So, I turned to the hardest guy known to man – Dave Thompson, **the *Butch Hard Guy* programmer himself.**

This routine gives infinite lives and, by pressing the 1 key, you can progress onto any level desired.

If you're interested, and you know that it's not in my nature to gossip, Dave is betrothed to our very own Aunt Aggie, and I would just like to wish them every happiness in the world together. More Ahhhs.

```
10   REM BUTCH HARD GUY HACK
20   REM BY DAVE THOMPSON
25   REM CRASH MAY 1987
30   BORDER 0: PAPER 0:INK 0: CLS
40   LET C=0
50   FOR X=32768 TO 32826:READ A:POKE
     X,A:LET C=C+A:NEXT X
60   IF C<>5875 THEN PRINT AT 10,10;
     "ERROR":STOP
70   LOAD "" CODE 16384
80   RANDOMIZE USR 32768
90   DATA 33,14,128,17,19,91,1,45,0
100  DATA
     237,176,195,0,91,175,50,64,138,33,48
110  DATA
     91,17,18,202,1,13,0,237,176,33,61,91
120  DATA
     17,63,161,1,3,0,237,176,195,133,158,6
     2,247,219
130  DATA
     254,230,1,192,62,1,50,201,91,201,105,
     18,202
```

BOMBJACK II POKES

Okay, okay, so Jack may be a superhero – but for some people that just isn't enough. They want infinite lives too! Luckily, I came across this POKE routine nestled comfortably at the bottom of the tips sack. I bring it to you now, courtesy of Jon North – **the super hacker from Sutton in Surrey. For some peculiar reason all of Jon's routines seem to have an aversion to remaining at the bottom of my sack.**



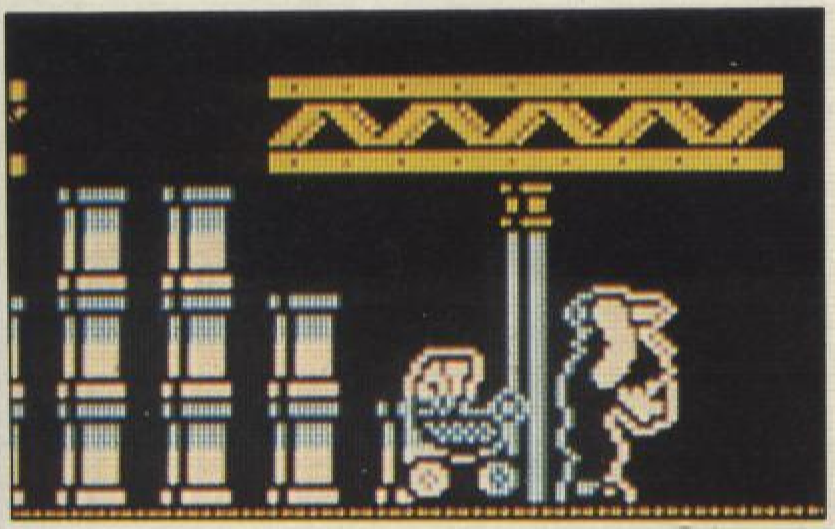
```
10   REM BOMBJACK II POKES
11   REM BY JON NORTH
12   REM CRASH MAY 1987
20   CLEAR 6e4: LOAD "" CODE
30   POKE 65226,250
40   FOR F=64e3 TO 64006
50   READ A:POKE F,A:NEXT F
60   RANDOMIZE USR 64700
70   DATA 175,50,35,99,195,0,91
```

COBRA — The lot!

As this is a Special Edition of Playing Tips, here's an easier solution to Ocean's manic platform game, *Cobra*, along with the infinite lives routine. The solution is courtesy of Richard Kidd **(no relation to the ex-Ed, I'm assured) from Rotherham in South Yorkshire, and the hack from** The Skunk (stinks supplied extra with an SAE)!

When on level three, leave the beefburger containing the invincibility pill until the siren starts to sound. Now, go up and get the pill and the night slasher enters, lobbing knives left, right and centre. Simply jump down to ground level and crouch, and when he's near enough, headbutt him from that position. This works every time! The pill makes sure the knives don't hurt you, so you can concentrate on the Slasher.

There is a drawback to this, you MUST headbutt him — allow him to walk through and he explodes — just like a normal baddie. But the game doesn't realise it's the Night Slasher and simply goes on and on until you pull the plug.

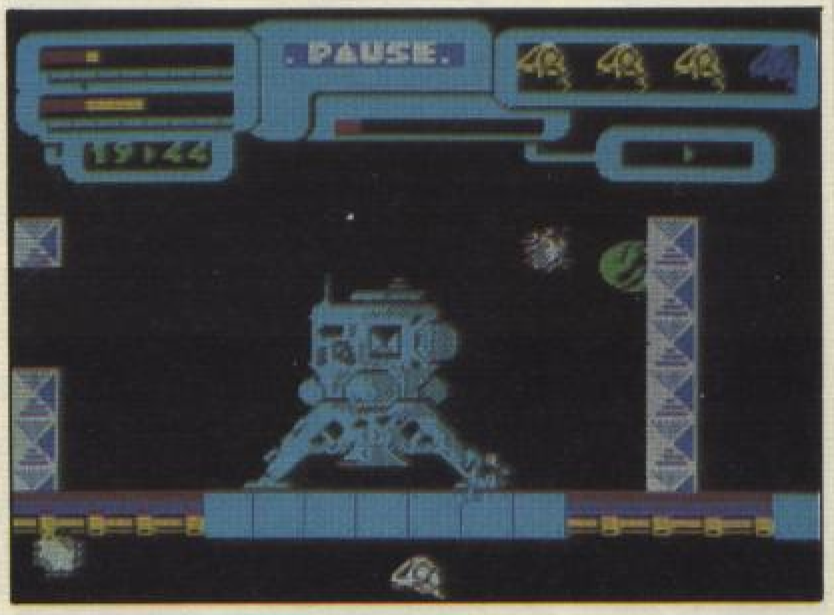


COBRA INFINITE LIVES

```
1    CLEAR 65000:LET T=0
2    FOR A=64223 TO 1E9:READ S:IF
     S<999 THEN POKE
     A,S:LET=T=+S:NEXT A
3    IF S<>T THEN PRINT "ERROR IN
     DATA":STOP
9    RANDOMIZE USR 64225
10   DATA 24,46,33,89,5,93
15   DATA 22,250,1,134,0,213
20   DATA 237,176,235,35,35
25   DATA 34,95,2450,346,122
30   DATA 112,46,215,116,46
35   DATA 207,54,188,33,38
40   DATA 210,34,126,250,225
45   DATA 49,61,251,221,225
50   DATA 209,191,55,8,249
55   DATA 233,49,65,251,221
60   DATA 225,209,59,225,193
65   DATA 205,29,251,24,43
70   DATA 221,110,0,124,170
75   DATA 171,221,172,221
80   DATA 173,173,221,119,0
85   DATA 124,203,99,40,3
90   DATA 129,131,146,128
95   DATA 103,221,35,27,122
99   DATA 179,32,225,201
100  DATA225, 81, 83, 168, 168, 97, 88, 152,
     92, 196, 68, 62, 183, 50, 109, 136, 62,
     201, 50, 109, 136, 62, 201, 50, 187, 154,
     33, 95, 251, 17, 0, 91, 1, 14, 0, 213, 237,
     176, 201, 33, 200, 249, 17, 254, 255, 1,
     33, 152, 237, 184, 195, 16, 175, 18062
```

ANFRACTUOS

This infinite everything routine from Jon North **arrived in the Towers a while ago, before we had even heard about the game. Simply type it in, run it and play the *Anfractuous* tape from the start.**




```
10   REM ANFRACTUOS
11   REM BY JON NORTH
12   REM CRASH MAY 1987
20   LOAD "" CODE:LET T=0
30   FOR F=23296 TO 23310
40   READ A: POKE F,A
50   LET T=T+(F-23286)*A:NEXT F
60   READ A:IF T<>A THEN STOP
70   FOR F=23311 TO 1E9:READ A
80   IF A=999 THEN RANDOMIZE USR
     23296
90   POKE F,A:NEXT F
100  DATA 62,255,50,203,92
110  DATA 33,14,91,34,115
120  DATA 255,195,88,255,175
130  DATA 34211
140  DATA 50,44,98
150  DATA 50,241,123
160  DATA 50,75,124
170  DATA 50,109,124
180  DATA 195,243,117,999
```

4 THE GREAT GOLDEN OLDIE COLLECTION

HERBERT'S DUMMY RUN CHEAT

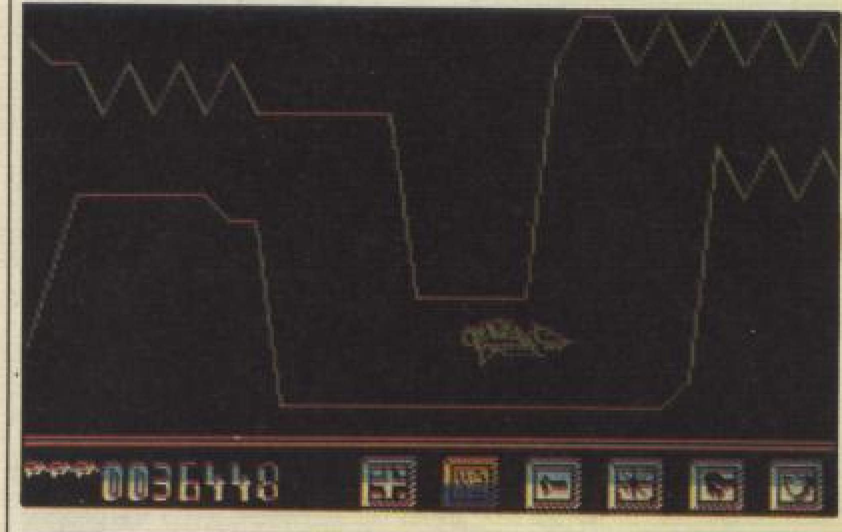
To paraphrase the late great WC Fields, I think babies should be eaten and not heard — at least babies like Herbert. Heaven knows why **Paul Jukes** from Walsall wants to provide Wally Week's little nipper with infinite lives.

Anyway, simply go onto the rope screen, climb up the rope and hold down the keys which spell out CHEAT. There's a buzz and hey presto! — you've got infinite lives. Good eh?

TRANSMUTER POKES

As I write, some time in mid-march, *Transmuter* has only been on sale for a week, and yet Dave Thompson has managed to hack his way through it and produce a POKE routine which provides infinite everything . . . I think.

```
10 REM TRANSMUTER
20 REM BY DAVE THOMPSON
25 REM CRASH MAY 1987
30 BORDER 0:PAPER 0:INK 0:CLS
40 LET C=0
50 FOR X=32768 TO 32788:READ A:POKE
   X,A:LET C=C+A:NEXT X
60 IF C<>2048 THEN PRINT AT
   10,10;"ERROR":STOP
70 LOAD ""CODE 16384
80 RANDOMIZE USR 32768
90 DATA33,14,128,17,21,91,1,7,0,237,
   176,195,0,91,175,50,206,112,195,
   206,93
```

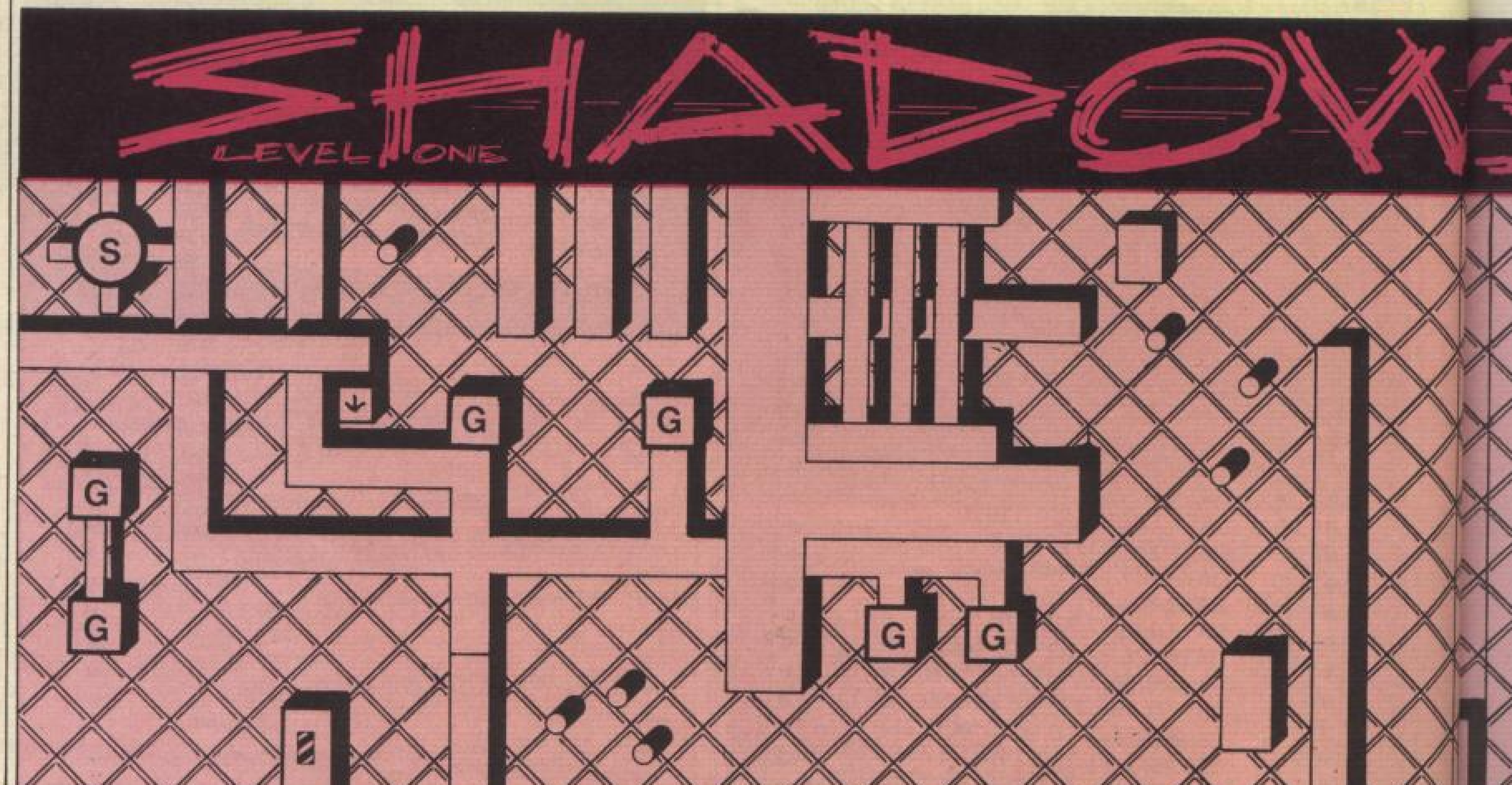


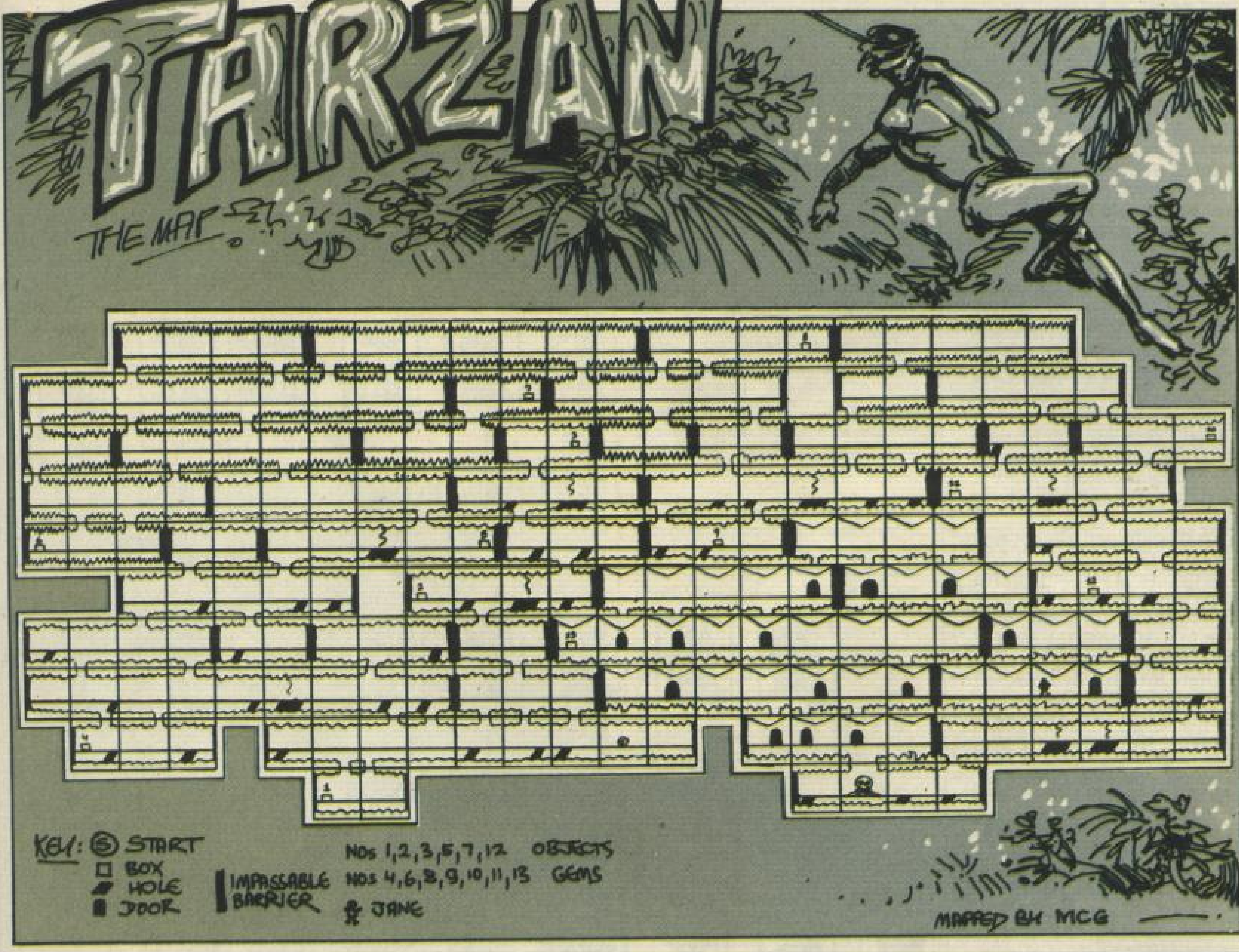


LEADERBOARD TIPS

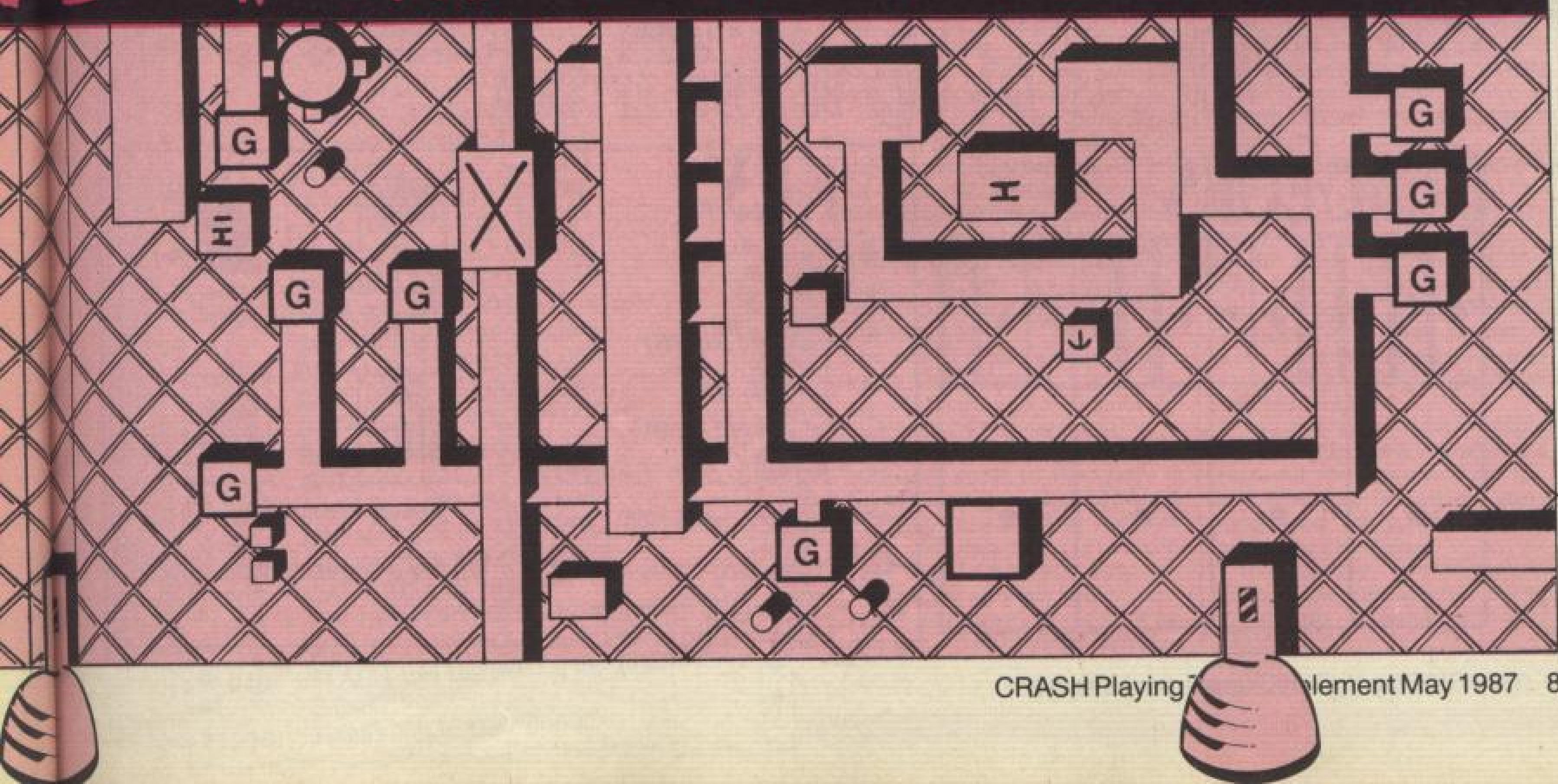
I haven't been out for a quick 18 holes on the course for ages. Well, there's hardly much chance of that these days with all the work they pile on my shoulders! But that's all beside the point – Chris Lee from Langdon Hills in Essex has worked out some approximate strength/distance ratings for the clubs in US Gold's great golfing simulation. Chris reminds that Minimum Power is when no bars come up on the gauge and Min+1 is one bar.

CLUB	MIN POWER	MIN+1 POWER	HALF POWER	MAX POWER
1 Wood	150	160	220	260
3 Wood	110	140	180	235
5 Wood	105	120	170	230
1 Iron	100	110	165	215
2 Iron	90	100	150	200
3 Iron	80	90	140	195
4 Iron	70	70	130	190
5 Iron	60	65	120	180
6 Iron	50	60	100	170
7 Iron	40	55	90	150
8 Iron	30	40	80	135
9 Iron	20	30	70	125
Putter	10	15	40	80




TARZAN
THE MAP
KEY: Ⓢ START
□ BOX
▰ HOLE
▮ DOOR
▮ IMPASSABLE BARRIER
NOs 1,2,3,5,7,12 OBJECTS
NOs 4,6,8,9,10,11,13 GEMS
JANE
MAPPED BY MCG

SKIMMER



ASTERIX TIPS AND SOLUTION

Just in case anyone is still struggling with the somewhat disappointing *Asterix* from Melbourne House, Mark Lindsay **from Bream in Somerset sent in this map, hints and solution. Take it away Mark . . .**

The potion is used in the arena, so if you're hit, you don't lose a life. And in the arena, if you kill ten men, you get a prize and a piece of the cauldron. To surrender, wait in a corner when fighting a Roman. This lets you explore the Dungeons if you have a key. To kill Romans, stand close to them and use low kicks.

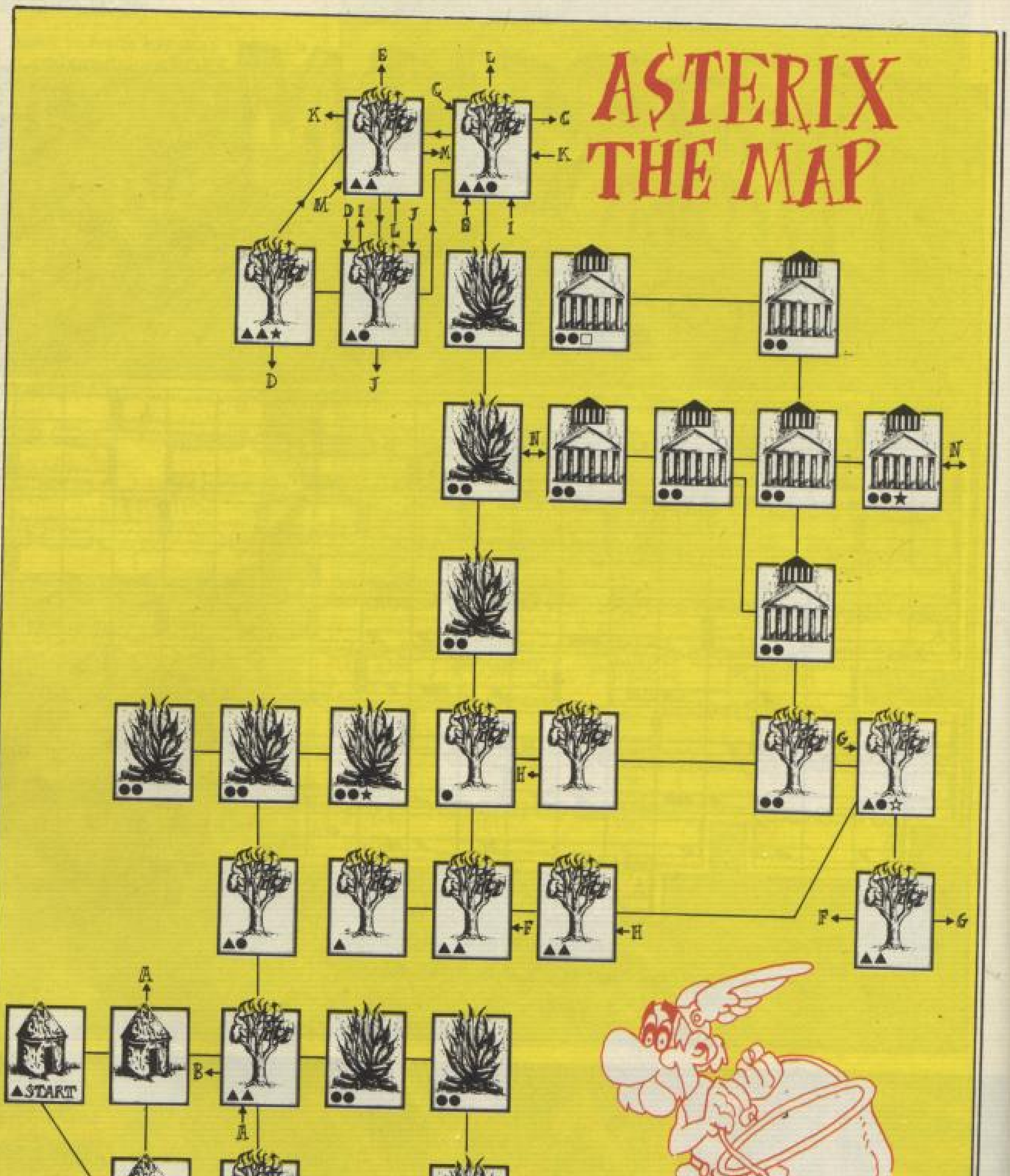
To kill pigs, use a left or right punch.

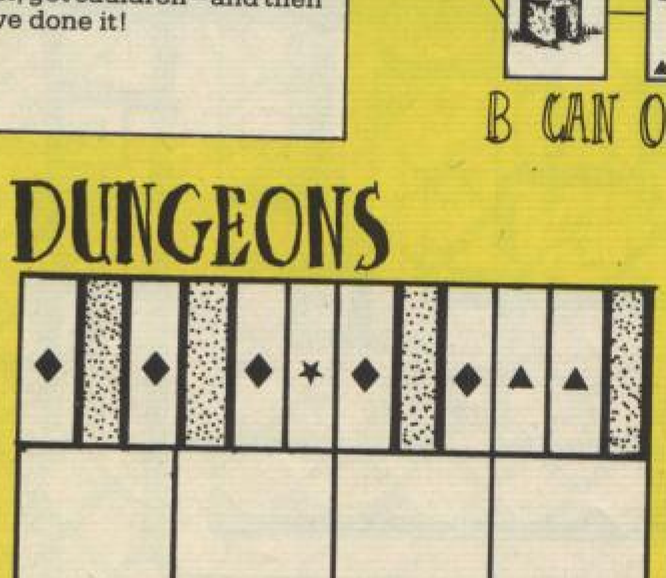
In the arena you can't move, so be ready to use a low kick. And to get to the arena, just wait in a cell until the door turns white.

There are only five pieces to the cauldron, and you do not have to return to the village to complete the game.

SOLUTION

From the start you go, right, right, up, up, get cauldron, left, down, down, right, up, right, right, right, get key, down, left, up, up, up, up, left, down, left, get cauldron, down, surrender, left to next set of cells, in first cell, get cauldron, wait in cell until door changes colour, go out the door, use potion, kill ten Romans, get cauldron, go out door, down, move to bottom of screen and go left, get cauldron – and then you've done it!







5 THE GREAT GOLDEN OLDIE COLLECTION

JET SET WILLY

A Golden Oldie section would be incomplete without an essential collection of *JSW* POKEs. The ruthless beasts plagued Robin Candy for many months; but now they're all here under one roof. Thank you to: Steven Combordelle, Stephen Buck, Mark Smith, Robert Gabriel **and countless others!**

First you'll need this BASIC loader. Just insert the appropriate POKE or POKEs in line 100, then run the program and start the *JSW* tape right from the beginning.

```
10   REM JSW LOADER
20   CLEAR 32767
30   PRINT "JET SET WILLY IS LOADING"
40   LOAD "" CODE
100  REM STICK YOUR POKES IN HERE!
1000 RANDOMIZE USR 33792
```

To get rid of all the monsters: POKE 35123,0
Continuous jumping: **POKE 36358,0**
Lets Willy fall without dying: **POKE 36477,1**
No need to enter the Writetyper code: **POKE 34275,10**
Disables the Attic bug: **POKE 59900,255**
All objects are collected when a room is entered: **POKE 37874,0**
Infinite lives: **POKE 35899,0**
Makes the banyan tree easier: **POKE 36545,0**
Only have to collect the tap to see the final effect: **POKE 41983,255**

Allows you to get past Maria: **POKE 37925,0**
Blocks of Hades: **POKE 50512,168: POKE 50520,168**

BOULDERDASH

This was probably one of CRASH's most controversial Smashes to date – arguments flowed through my mail bag for months afterwards. Anyway, here's the infinite lives routine from David Wingate **of Roker in Sunderland. Lots of data here, so watch your typing!**

```
10  REM BOULDERDASH
12  REM BY DAVID WINGATE
13  REM CRASH MAY 1987
20  FOR D=60000 TO 60098: READ
    W:POKE D,W:NEXT D
30  DATA 221,033,000,250,017
40  DATA 017,000,055,062,255
50  DATA 205,086,005,221,033
60  DATA 000,250,017,132,000
70  DATA 055,062,255,205,086
80  DATA 005,221,033,000,064
90  DATA 017,000,027,055,062
100 DATA 255,205,086,005,221
110 DATA 033,000,250,017,000
120 DATA 002,055,062,255,205
130 DATA 086,005,221,033,000
140 DATA 064,017,000,027,055
150 DATA 062,255,205,086,005
160 DATA 049,255,093,221,033
170 DATA 000,094,017,050,091
190 DATA 055,062,255,205,086
200 DATA 121,062,000,050,032
210 DATA 121,062,000,050,033
220 DATA 121,195,183,124
230 INK 7:PAPER 0:BORDER 0:CLS:PRINT
    AT 9,3;"PLAY BOULDERDASH TAPE"
240 FLASH 1:PRINT AT 13,15;"FROM THE
    START"
250 RANDOMIZE USR 60000
```

BACK TO SKOOL

Microsphere's follow-up to the immensely popular *School Daze* has provoked quite a lot of interest over the past few months, and after rummaging around in my Tips Sack Anthony Dixon **from Walsall gets the credit for his complete solution. All you have to do is . . .**

When the game starts go to the girls school and search the desks for a water pistol and stink bombs. If you can't find them here search the boys school desks instead.

Catch a mouse as soon as you can. Use the water pistol to fill the three cups on the ledge next to the flight of steps that lead to the boys school classrooms. To get the numbers that unlock the bike from the conker tree, stand on the third step and face the three cups. When a teacher is walking towards you, as soon as he is under the hinge furthest away from you, fire the catapult. Hit him and he tells you the number.

When you have the four numbers, find a clean blackboard and write them on it – the bike is then unlocked. You have to wait until no teachers are on the steps leading to the headmaster's study. Go up to his study and turn around. When the headmaster's on the second step leading towards you, drop a stinkbomb. He'll tell you off and open the top window.

This is the tricky part. You have to fire the catapult out of the top window and hit Albert on the head. The best chance is when playtime is nearly over and Albert is inside the boys school. If you look at the open door that lets you into the playground you can see a line running down it where the two walls meet. When Albert has just passed that line, fire the catapult, and with a bit of luck he'll be knocked out.

Next playtime get on the bike and cycle to the gate. If Albert hasn't already opened it, crash into it. This ensures that you can jump over the gate easily when you have to.

Now, for another tricky part. When playtime is over stay by the gate until Albert arrives. Let him lock it and keep in front of him as he goes to lock the boys school door. Albert won't lock the door until you have gone inside, so you have to go quickly into the boys school and then back into the playground. If you have timed it correctly, Albert shuts the door leaving you in the playground.

Go to the bike, mount it and then stand on it. Jump from it and you should land on the gate and be able to get over it. If you are lucky the headmistress will be in a class, so you can get into her study and fill the water pistol with the sherry. If she comes after you release the mouse and run.

Usually a teacher gives chase. They can open the door and the gate allowing you to return to the boys school. Back at the boys school, fill your water pistol as before. Use the same procedure as before but stand on the third step this time – they should provide you with some letters. When four letters have been collected write them on a blackboard, and then you have a key. Go to the room at the back of the science lab. Collect the frog and wait until the next playtime.

When playtime is over, stay by the gate until Albert comes. Get on the bike and cycle into the girls school. The headmistress should be in her study now. Position the bike underneath the cup, and do as you did to jump over the locked gate. When you manage to get the frog into the cup, cycle back to the boys school.

At the next playtime, cycle back to the girls school and fire the catapult at the headmistress and knock her down while she's underneath the cup. Fire the catapult again and the missile will hit her and go upwards. If the headmistress is underneath the cup the missile will hit it and the frog is released.

You are now in possession of the key to the headmaster's safe. All you have to do is follow him into his study, then jump and touch the safe to complete the game.

Incidentally, five thousand lines are deducted when Haley kisses you – this comes in very handy.

BACK TO SKOOL

AND THE POKES . . .
Now, that solution is very long, my fingers are feeling the strain of it, and just to make sure that you'll get it first time around Paul Stephenson has supplied the POKEs.

```
5    REM BACK TO SKOOL
6    REM BY PAUL STEPHENSON
7    REM CRASH MAY 1987
10   LET P=32768: LET T=0
20   FOR F=1 TO 12: READ A$
30   FOR G=1 TO 15 STEP 2
40   LET A=CODE A$(G)-48-(7 AND
     A$(G)>"9")
50   LET A=A*16+CODE A$(G+1)-48-(7
     AND A$(G+1)>"9")
60   POKE P,A: LET P=P+1: LET T=T+A
70   NEXT G:NEXT F
80   IF T<>11431 THEN PRINT "ERROR":
     BEEP 1,0: STOP
90   PRINT #0; TAB 4; "START BACK TO
     SKOOL TAPE"; AT 16,0
100  RANDOMIZE USR 1366
110  RANDOMIZE USR 1366
120  PAPER 1:INK 1:POKE 23624,9:CLS
130  RANDOMIZE USR 32785
1000 DATA "3EOD3D20FD790EFE"
1010 DATA "ED48A9E640C02C20"
1020 DATA "F4F33E09D3FE06BA"
1030 DATA "DD21FE3F11010031"
1040 DATA "195D2EC8CD00807D"
1050 DATA "FED530F6CD0080DD"
1060 DATA "7400DD192601CD00"
1070 DATA "80CD00803EDE95CB"
1080 DATA "142ED030F12CDD7C"
1090 DATA "FE8020E3DD7DB820"
1100 DATA "E10686DD681D1E17"
1110 DATA "28D87A32D874C900"
```

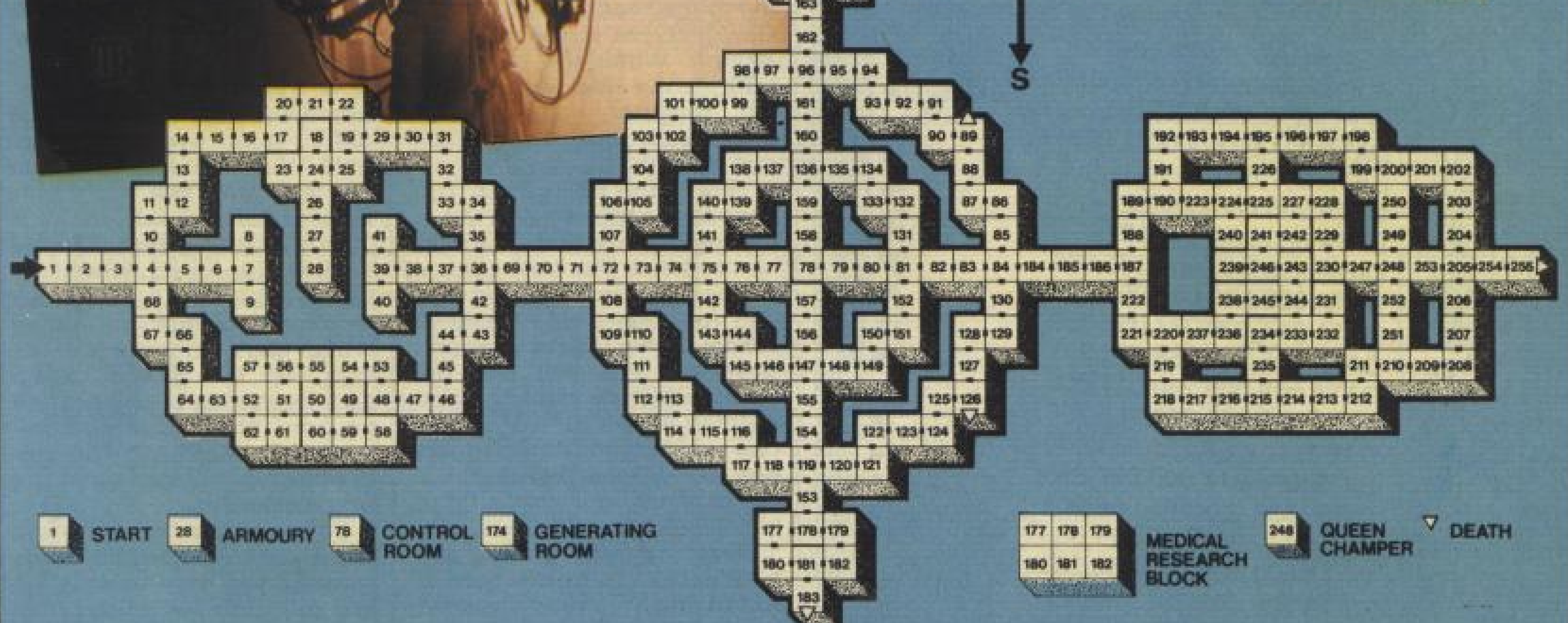
And there we have it – the thirty-second page is upon me. At the start I wondered whether I would be able to fill the space; but it wasn't hard, and there could have been more pages!

I hope everyone enjoyed the Supplement and will find the contents useful in the next few weeks. Don't forget, these are your pages, and it's your tips, and maps that keep it alive and kicking me in the teeth. I'd just like to say thank you to everyone who made it possible, the CRASH review team for trying things out (and losing the library copies), the art department cartographers for tidying up the maps and not blinking when all the typesetting arrived, and of course the readers who wrote in with the hacks.

So I'll sign off now, and leave you with Sigourney Weaver, as she prepares for battle in Aliens.







PLAYING TIPS EXTRA

1987 PBM MAILBOX



Hello again. This issue I have some good offers for a few lucky readers, and some great reading for the rest of you – I hope. Read on and write in!

JADE GAMES – THE FALL AND RISE

As some of you will already know, JADE GAMES have just stopped running their very popular game, *Arcadia*, following a legal clash with KJC over *Earthwood* and a certain copyright law. KJC accused JADE of infringement of copyright and JADE, not having the finance to fight, have conceded to KJC's demand: to close *Arcadia* down. This done, JADE now hope to rise from the ashes by launching a new computer moderated game – *Shattered World*.

WOZZAT?

Shattered World is a sci-fi strategy game, spiced with fantasy and governed by a yellow rulebook. The game is set upon the world of Flindar, a once sentient planet which is now being torn apart by gravitational forces. These have been induced by a rogue planetoid now orbiting as a moon. As ever, sillyvisation has collapsed, leaving a radioactive and mutant-infested landscape behind. Into this you are hurled, as commander of a Tentralith (a big machine created to cope with the changing environment). You must fight for survival, and plot to maintain a regular income of energy crystals by mining the surface. The need for power is great. You gotta fight to win, or else you don't. If you know what I mean.



OWZAT?

Shattered World is a deadline game, played on the ever-popular hexagonal map. Many types of giant machines exist to be found or captured – or even destroyed, and movement is not quite so limited as it was in *Arcadia*; these beasties have quite respectable ranges of movement for each turn. The game works on a point system: the obvious way to win is to hit a secret score and wham bam – you win a doomed planet. Not much use, eh? JADE report that there's another way . . . something to do with a plateau and a cure of the world's troubles. Nice touch, if you ask me.



WOZZIT COST?

Not a lot. Turn costs are £1.50 each, for which you receive a well laid out and informative computer printout. For details of set up, write to: JADE GAMES, ***Freepost, P O Box 54, Southsea, Hants, PO4 0NA.***

FIRST POST

I've just heard from **K G Pack** of a new PBM magazine, recently launched by himself and **Bob Patteson**. The magazine costs £1.00 from: **FIRST POST, K G Pack, *Walnut Tree Lodge, 9 Kings Meadow Lane, Higham Ferrers, Northamptonshire, NN9 8JE.***

The first issue is quite impressive (although most of the articles are written by the dynamic duo themselves), containing pieces on *AES*, *Kings of Steel*, *Where Lies the Power* and *Starglobe* among others. Worth a look.

PBM FORUM

SOCCER ONE . . .

Dear Brendon,
Please can you get me involved in any of the soccer games?

S Eede, Northants

Aaargh! Soccer again . . . mutter mutter. Try writing to all but one of the addresses mentioned in earlier issues – and while you're at it, have a go at a 'normal' PBM game (Vorcon Wars, Conquest and Crime for instance) to get the most from the hobby. PBM is more than a medium for football management games!

BK

FOREIGN WARS

Dear Brendon,
I've been reading your column for some time now and find it very interesting. I'd like to join *Vorcon Wars*, but I am worried whether or not my order would reach England in time. Is there a special international version? Also, are games with open deadlines more difficult to play for players outside of the UK? Finally – do international games cost more?

I wish you luck with your column and hope that it will expand quickly!

R van Alteren, Holland

Most deadline games offer what is termed a 'slow turnaround' version to accommodate Europeans (and even beyond). These games tend to cost a bit more to play where heavier letters are concerned, although small letters (up to 60g) can be posted to EEC countries at the same charge as for inland first class mail, so this is not necessarily the common case: write and find out!

Extra UK players can suffer in open-ended games which operate in a form of realtime. This need not hamper your enjoyment of a game, however. In fact, if you wish to play the game properly, StarGlobe *is more realistic for international players than for us Brits (simulated time delays, etc . . .).*

BK

DIPLO DIRECTORY: GOOD OR BAD?

Dear Brendon,
Please do not print my name and address in the next issue of the Diplomatic Directory as I had previously asked, the reason being that I have received a letter from TIME PATTERNS threatening to throw me out of *StarGlobe Four* if it is printed. I hope you see the importance of this and act on this letter accordingly.

DB, London

TIME PATTERNS have informed me of the action they are taking against certain members of the directory – I believe it to be just. It appears that some members have been ruining the game for others (and themselves) by giving away coveted secrets and information modules away willy-nilly. This is not *the way to play a game; the object is to learn by your mistakes, not by joining some half-baked alliance created solely for information swapping rather than for strategic strength. StarGlobe players mentioned in the directory who have not been engaged in such goings on need not worry, and to help the GMs of all games the format of the directory will be changed from the next issue: to get in touch with members, a note will have to be passed via the game control (if the facility exists) as no more addresses will be given. Sorry, but those who spoil it for some spoil it for all . . .*

BK

. . . SOCCER TWO – STILL NOT VERY WHITTY

Dear Brendon,
I read the letter from **G Williams** in the March issue with some interest – I too have lost money to Mr Whitty. Might it be an idea to draw up a table of 'Goodie' and 'Baddie' PBM addresses?
Good luck with your letter to Mr Whitty.

S Edwards, Cardiff

Readers who have fallen foul of Mr Whitty's tidy little trick may be interested to know that after having a recorded delivery 'reminder' I sent returned to my address by the Post Office, inscribed with the magic words 'Gone Away', I have passed the problem on to the Maidstone Cops (the police).

BK

READER'S REVIEWS

Dear Brendon,
I'm just writing to give you an idea. I think that some room should be devoted to Reader's Reviews of various PBM games: big and small. Why not try for some more space to accommodate such a section!

Patrick Walsh, Berks

Good idea Patrick, I have been considering doing this for some time now, and you will be pleased to hear that I have just received the go-ahead from the Ed! Over the

next few months I shall be offering reviewer positions in any game which I can gain them, preferably two per game. Come on now GMs – send those offers to our editorial address! This month I have two places in Crisis, a game of world destruction/domination by M.A.G. and Shattered World (a game which could well be set in the aftermath of Crisis) by JADE GAMES. All I need from my reviewers is a 500 word review after two months, and a final report at the end of the game. If you're interested, write to; **CRASH PBM REVIEWERS, PO Box 10, Ludlow Shropshire SY8 1DB.**

DB

TURF MAPPER

Dear Brendon,
I thought that I'd write and let you know of a computer program I have written for the 48K Spectrum aimed at players of *It's a Crime!* The program is a turf mapper, which I am selling for just £1 including postage. If any CRASH readers are interested then I will send them their copy as soon as possible after I receive their request.

A Rosey, East Sussex

Seems a fair enough offer; Andrew appears genuine (he sent me a copy of the program) – why not try it?

BK

CRIME! A CRIME?

Dear Brendon,
Although I enjoy playing *It's A Crime*, much of my pleasure is removed by the constant presence of input errors: at the moment, KJC are averaging an error per turn! These errors are costing me (and probably others) time, money and wasted moves . . . believe it or not, I am not too happy.

Besides this problem, I feel a fallacy exists over the supposed cost of this game – 62.5 pence? No way, Jose! To play the game properly one must pay at least £1.30 per turn. Cheap? Not really.

All said and done, I'd just like to point out that I do enjoy reading your column, which has introduced me to an enjoyable hobby.

A Watson, Manchester

I quite agree with your comments about the cost of playing IAC – it is not really such a cheap game to play is it? As for the input errors; well maybe some are GM orientated, but are you certain that your order sheet is legible? KJC may not be entirely to blame, you know. Has any one else had trouble with IAC input errors?

BK

LUDLOW DIPLOMATIC DIRECTORY SHROPSHIRE

March is a merry month for marauding maniacs (who are, no doubt, all as mad as a March PBMer . . .). Anyway and anyhow, here lies this month's list of successful candidates for the DIPLOMATIC DIRECTORY . . .

★001 Adrian Neal
48 Marketstead Estate, Kirton, Boston, Lincolnshire PE20 1SL
GAMES: *Vorcon Wars 72 & 78; Capitol 15; Earthwood 52; Arcadia 6; Star Empires 1; Conquest*

★002 Jason French
78 Princes Road, Ellacombe, Torquay TQ1 1PA
GAMES: *Vorcon Wars 75 (Commander BLITAD)*

★003 Travis Smith
27 Sharmon Crescent, Braunstone Frith, Leicester LE3 6NW.
GAMES: *Starglobe 4 (SS Belle Julie)*

★004 Robert Darbyshire
22 Thornton Gate, Clevleys, Lancs, FY5 1JN
GAMES: *It's A Crime! 1 (Death Warriors); It's A Crime! 4 (Megacity Blues)*

★005 Stuart Millinship
17 Graveney Gardens, Arnold, Nottingham NG5 6QW
GAMES: *Vorcon Wars 75 (Commander SHUTUN)*

★006 Mr G G Manganoni
109 Kings Road, Farncombe, Surrey GU7 3UE
GAMES: *Saturnalia; Crasimoff's World; Explorers of Orion; Lands of the Crimson Sun; Aes; Mark of Chaos; Untamed Land; Vesuvian*

★007 Mr C J McCarthy
39A Seaview Road, Liscard, Wallesey, Merseyside L45 4QN
GAMES: *Starglobe 1; Star Empires 1; Vorcon Wars 19; Saturnalia; Fleet Manoeuvres P107*

★008 Scott Macfarlane
2 Broomside Terrace, Costorphine, Edinburgh EH12 7LZ
GAMES: *Vorcon Wars 60; Super Vorcon Wars 77*

★009 Paul Davidson
51 Waterloo Road, Prestwick, Ayrshire, Scotland KA9 2AA
GAMES: *Vorcon Wars 60 (Commander PEPISH); Arcadia; Conquest*

★010 Kev Wasey
9 Clarkson House, Maysoule Road, Battersea, London SW11 2BP
GAMES: *Earthwood 30*

★011 Ian Hudson
53 Deepmore Close, Alrewas, Nr Burton-upon-Trent, Staffs
GAMES: *Vorcon Wars 65 (Commander PESTIB); Super Vorcon Wars 77 (Commander FRUGAD); World of Vengeance (Ian's Invincibles nr Bury St Edmunds)*

★012 Gareth Evans
4 Whitelands Road, Thatcham, Newbury, Berkshire RG13 4AR
GAMES: *Arcadia 6 (Egg Groinside)*

★013 Mike Adams
774 Holmefield Road, Liverpool, Merseyside LK9 3PQ
GAMES: *Vorcon Wars; Conquest; It's A Crime! 4 (Priests)*

★014 David Lane
23 Florence Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham N92 5HR
GAMES: *Casus Belli 5; Player 16*

★015 Martin Higgins
Wallesey Road, Wallesey, Merseyside L44 2AG
GAMES: *Vorcon Wars 72; It's A Crime! 4*

★016 Cliff Frost
175 Queens Road, Leicester LE2 3FN
GAMES: *Saturnalia; Arcadia; Earthwood 44; Kings of Steel 17; Arcadia; It's A Crime!; Swords and Shields*

★017 Robin van den Yssel
Smaragdlaan 172, 2332 BX Leideh, Zuid Holland, Netherlands
GAMES: *Vorcon Wars 72 (Commander TREBIN); Starglobe 3 (The Dutchman)*

★018 P Brunstan
Cae Mari Pwn House, Thomastown, Merthyr Tydfil, Mid Glamorgan, South Wales
GAMES: *It's A Crime! 2 (Death)*

★019 Steve Vickers
26 Swinton Court, Harrogate HG2 0BB
GAMES: *Soccer Star; Saturnalia; It's A Crime! 4; World of Chaos*

★020 Barnaby Dellar
11 Priory Grove, Stockwell, London SW8 2PD
GAMES: *Starglobe 4*

★021 Stephen Holt
27 Rosemary Road, Sprowston, Norwich, Norfolk NR7 8ER
GAMES: *Vorcon Wars 61 (Commander BRIDER); It's A Crime! 4 (Fighting Uruk-Hai)*

★022 Kevin Pack
Walnut Tree Lodge, 9 Kings Meadow Lane, Higham Ferrers, Northamptonshire NN9 8JE
GAMES: *Earthwood; Saturnalia; Starglobe 4; Orion's Finger; It's A Crime! 3; Casus Belli; Aes*

★023 Matthew Hanson
10 Denby Lane Crescent, Grange Moor, Wakefield, West Yorkshire WF4 4EB
GAMES: *Starglobe 4 (SS Obsidian Fox); Arcadia*

★024 Gavin Marshall
36 Spur Road, Orpington, Kent BR6 0QL
GAMES: *Vorcon Wars 71*

★025 Owen Whitehead
213 Park Road, Barnsley, S70 1QW
GAMES: *Aes ('Rillion' – E Side), Saturnalia (Grendl of the Web), Enchirodon (Brothers in Arms), It's A Crime (Brothers in Arms), From The Mouth of Hell (Elf), World of Chaos (Rillion Kerr), Soccer Star (Morning Star RS League)*

★026 Damian Manning
12 Warden Road, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands, B73 5SB
GAMES: *Starglobe (SS Alvon), It's A Crime (Merry Mob)*

★027 John Preen
12 Underdale Avenue, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY2 5DY
GAMES: *Starglobe Four (SS Broadsword of the Guild Alliance), Vorcon Wars 78 (Plonog)*

★028 John Kemp
9 Wold View, Caistor, Lincoln, LN7 6UU.
GAMES: *It's A Crime! 4 (New York Assassins), Arcadia 8 (Lord Centaurus at Jihad City, P27)*

★029 Milan Petronic
24 Dell Road, Kings Norton, Birmingham, B30 2HZ
GAME: *Arcadia 13 (Draug Dur)*

★030 JC Fowler
11 Beaconsfield Place, St Agnes, Cornwall, TR5 0SZ
GAMES: *Starglobe Three, Arcadia 8*

★031 Kevin Edwards
52 Woodlands Road, Irchester, Northants NN9 7BU
GAMES: *Vorcon 60, It's A Crime! 4, City of Strife.*

★032 Jason Cottrell
17 Back Lane, Barrington, Cambs, CB2 5RF
GAMES: *Saturnalia (Axil Taranus), Tyranny (P5)*

★033 Michael R Stannard
44 Harrington Street, Cleethorpes, South Humberside, DN35 7AZ
GAMES: *Arcadia 10 (Mordran the Unknown at Seven Springs City)*

★034 Malcolm Sums
76 Mount Road, Canterbury, Kent, CT1 1YF
GAMES: *Soccer Star (Kilmore Oilers), Bradley's Football (Houston Oilers)*

★035 Paul Davidson
51 Waterloo Road, Prestwick, Ayrshire, Scotland, KA9 2AA
GAMES: *Vorcon Wars 60 (Pepish), Arcadia 7 (Ped at Moriquendi City), Conquest (Anar Narion, maps 18/19)*

★036 S Davies
16 Clara Street, Ton-Pentre, Rhondda, Mid Glam, S. Wales, CF41 7HQ
GAMES: *It's A Crime! 4 (gang 315), Vorcon Wars 64 (Chotub)*

★037 S Wyatt
60 St Andrews Road, Shoeburyness, Essex, SS3 9JJ
GAMES: *Vorcon Wars 73 (Prifun), Vorcon Wars 78 (Sathal), It's A Crime! 4 (Mercenaries), Kings of Steel (Woodland Alliance)*

★038 Richard Goff
20 Inglis Road, Colchester, Essex, CO3 3HU
GAME: *Arcadia 12 (player 17)*

★039 Jason Huggins
35 Garratts Lane, Banstead, Surrey, SM7 2ED
GAME: *Saturnalia (Vetrex)*

So ends another Diplomatic Directory – don't forget to send your applications to our chief Diplomat at:
PBM DIRECTORY, BRENDON KAVANAGH, CRASH, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW SHROPSHIRE, SY8 1DB

THE FULL-COLOUR

WIN A FERGUSON RGB MONITOR, SPECTRUM PLUS TWO AND MONITOR INTERFACE

Crash Competition

For the second month running, those generous people from FERGUSON, famous for their televisions and monitors, are offering CRASH readers the chance to win an MC05 Monitor and the necessary Interface to link it up to a Spectrum. And to show that we're just as willing, we've thrown in another Spectrum + 2 for the outright winner our our CRASH Trivia competition.

The MC05 is a very neat piece of equipment, allowing you to enjoy a first class colour display for your games, and it also doubles as a telly – so when you tire of searching drawers, picking up keys and using passcards, a prod of a button, a twiddle of a knob, and you can tune in to *East Enders*.

As you can imagine, this kind of technology doesn't come cheap – the Monitor and Interface would normally set you back around £245, and when you throw in the Spectrum + 2, you're talking in the region of £375.

To win this prize all you have to do is write down the correct answer to the eight following CRASH Trivia questions on the back of a postcard (or outside of a sealed envelope) and send it to us at: **CRASH TRIVIA COMP, CRASH, PO BOX 10, LUDLOOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1DB** to arrive no later than 30 May. First correct entry out of the boot of Roger Kean's Porsche wins the Monitor, Interface and Computer. The next ten runners-up will each get CRASH Hats and T-shirts for being clever – and lucky.

CRASH TRIVIA

1. Name the Terminal Man's two companions in the first story.
2. Which of these three got the highest CRASH Overall rating? *Shadowfire, Starglider, Frankie Goes To Hollywood*?
3. Which of Lloyd's Hermes typewriters is the most recent?
4. Which was the first issue of CRASH that Graeme Kidd edited?
5. In which issue of CRASH did Derek Brewster first appear in Adventure Trail?
6. Who did Frontline before Sean Masterson?
7. Which was the hit game CRASH never rated in its review?
8. What was the first full title of CRASH magazine?



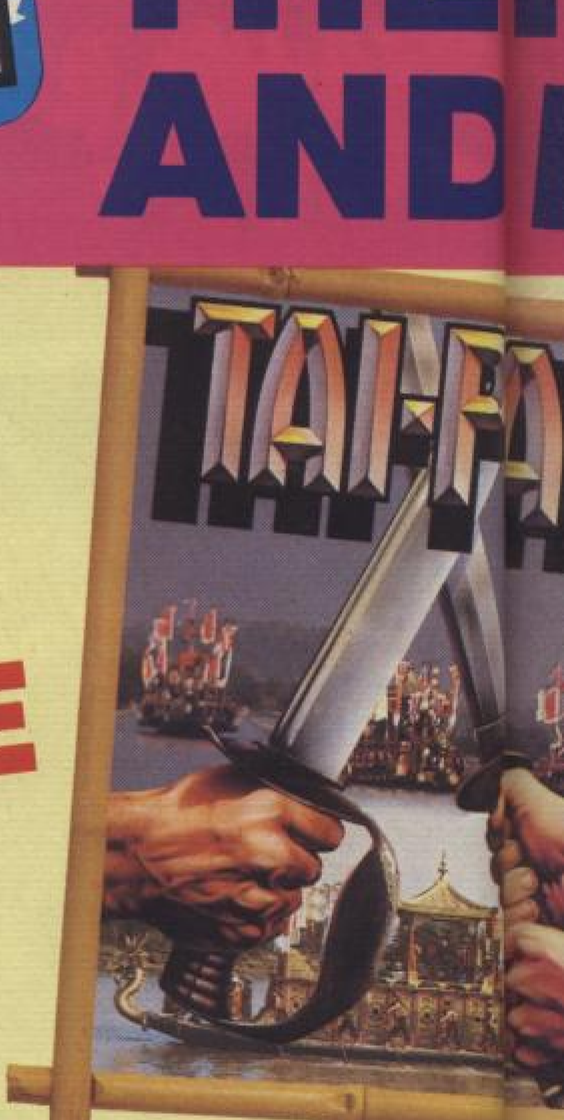
E COMPUTING COMP



CRASH

ZX SPECTRUM

THE
AND



says . . . GRAB A SUBSCRIPTION AND GET A FREE OCEAN GAME WORTH £7.95!



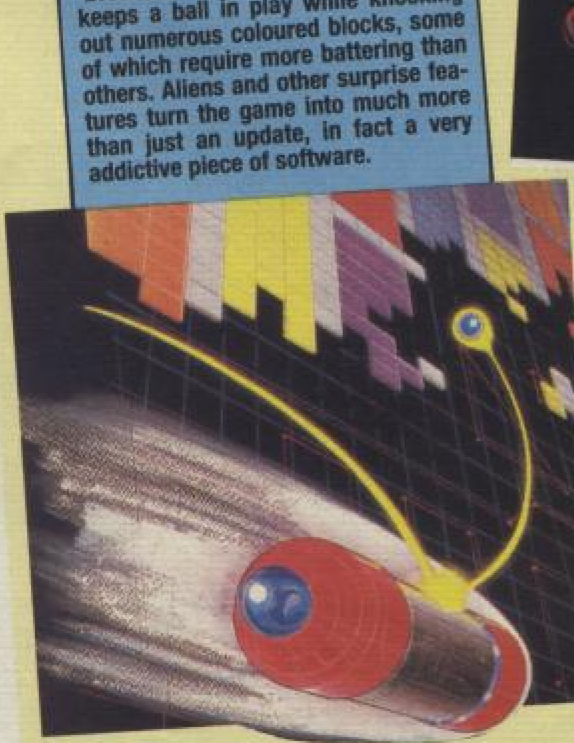
CHOOSE ANY ONE OF THE FOLLOWING

ARMY MOVES

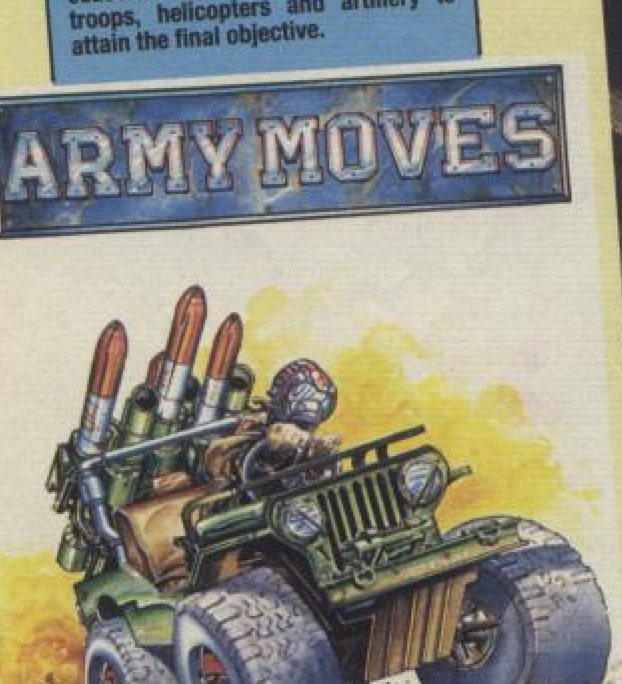
So new, the ink's still drying on the inlay card! In Army Moves you are one of the Elite – a hand-picked crack trooper in battle against a formidable enemy. Skill as well as stamina is paramount in a game where you face ceaseless bombardment by enemy troops, helicopters and artillery to attain the final objective.

ARKANOID

One for the more contemplative player, Arkanoid is a modern variation on the 'Breakout' theme, where the player keeps a ball in play while knocking out numerous coloured blocks, some of which require more battering than others. Aliens and other surprise features turn the game into much more than just an update, in fact a very addictive piece of software.



ARMY MOVES



MAG MAX

And here's another yet-to-be-released powerhouse of arcade fun from Ocean. Yes, the Nichibutsu coin-op hero Mag Max himself hits the smaller vid screen. Max is a robot turning into an awesome fighting machine before your very eyes, the sort of metal man who can handle anything – almost. The question is, can you handle Mag Max?

SHORT CIRCUIT

If you can keep your eyes off our playing tips this month for long enough, then you'll enjoy the adventures of Number Five, the unfortunate robot stuck inside Nova Robotics' headquarters. They think he's dangerous and want to take him apart, but can you keep him free of their clutches long enough to escape the complex and reach freedom?



MAG THAT LEAPS BOUNDS AHEAD!



HEAD OVER HEELS

Voted one of the highest ever CRASH Smashes last month at 97 percent, Head Over Heels is by Jon Ritman and Bernie Drummond. It's one of the best isometric perspective games on the Spectrum, featuring the two spy heroes, Head and Heels, and lots of large, detailed graphics in a graphical adventure to tax the most hardened player. Don't miss it! If you haven't already got it, here's your chance!

TAI-PAN

From the pen of James Clavell came Shogun and then Tai-Pan, both massive best-sellers. Now, thanks to Ocean, you can enter the oriental world of its pirate hero – a smuggler and manipulator of men who achieved riches beyond imagination. Blood, sin, treachery, conspiracy and murder are the ingredients of this brand new, action-packed simulation game set to thrill everyone soon.





Unbelievable as it may seem, there are still people out there who don't have a subscription to CRASH (despite it's being virtually compulsory). This situation naturally upsets Guru Denise, the CRASH Subscription Queen, whose life is made a misery if her productivity (that's you, dear reader) isn't up by at least 200 percent every month.

After all, £15 for 12 issues of the best Spectrum games mag is a fair deal all round as it stands, but when you add to that the opportunity to get your hands on a FREE Ocean game to boot (well to play anyway) – what can a Subscription Queen say? She can say that having just paid out hundreds of pounds to a top notch advertising agency to come up with this kind of copy designed to induce you to part with just a fraction of that hard-earned cash, it had better work.

We won't say any more about CRASH – it speaks for itself, but three of the six Ocean games on offer (*Army Moves*, *Tai-Pan* and *Mag Max*) are so new that at the time of writing that they're still being finished, which means you may just have to wait a bit longer if you choose one of them, although they're due for release around the end of April.

All you have to do is make your choice of free game, fill out the form and enclose a payment of £15 for your subscription (£22 if you live outside the mainland UK), and make Guru Denise's day for her.

DEAR GURU DENISE

This is simply incredible! How do you keep it up, providing me with so much choice that I want to subscribe every month?! I've chosen my free Ocean game and been kind enough to tick an appropriate box below to let you know which one it is. I understand that if I've ticked one the of the first three games on offer, I might have to wait just a little bit longer for it, as it's very new.

Please tick the game of your choice – one only now . . .

- ☐ ARMY MOVES
- ☐ TAI-PAN
- ☐ MAG MAX
- ☐ HEAD OVER HEELS
- ☐ ARKANOID
- ☐ SHORT CIRCUIT

Denise will be sending off your free OCEAN game, just as soon as she can after receiving your CRASH subscription payment of £15. Just fill out the form below, make out your cheque or postal order to **NEWSFIELD LTD**, and whizz it off in the post to us at:

GURU DENISE, CRASH SUBSCRIPTIONS, PO BOX 20, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1DB.

Name ....

Address ....

....

....

Postcode ....

☐ I enclose £15.00 ▶ I enclose £22.00 (Foreign Sub scribers)

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PLEASE DEBIT MY VISA/ACCESS ACCOUNT £ [ ]

I wish to pay by Visa/Access (delete as applicable)

Signature   Expiry Date

Please Charge My Account No:

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This offer is subject to availability and closes on 25 June 1987



"...Worth shelling out for..."
The Woolwich Arsenal Times

"...A game for the hard of herring..."
'Hearsay' Magazine

"...Whale Kipper Whelk home in the Eel-side..."
Cardiff Choir News

"...Gave me a bad Haddock and made me a nervous wreck..."
Mrs. Lighthouse

"...Very fishy..."
Society for the Preservation of the Obvious.

"...Could have filled the Halibut Hall..."
André Prawn

FTL
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Featuring...
HYDROMATION

SPECTRUM £7.95 AMSTRAD £8.95

AVAILABLE MID-MAY

Fresh from his dismal triumph on Knutz Folly, Sweevo is thrust onto the watery world of **DEATHBOWL,** a planet which, for no good reason, has been converted into a gigantic aquarium.

Will Sweevo succeed in his mysterious mission — or will the Great Bowl-Keeper pull the plug on him?

HYDROFOOL is a fast, 3-D, seek, chase, puzzle and laugh game, featuring the fabulous but irrelevant **HYDROMATION.**

FTL FASTER THAN LIGHT, CARTER FOLLIS GROUP OF COMPANIES, SEDGLEY ROAD EAST, TIPTON, WEST MIDLANDS DY4 7UJ. Tel: 021-557 2981 (4 lines)

FRNTLINE

with Philippa Irving



MORE STRATEGY PLEASE

My Finals are looming closer, and like everyone else, I've drawn out an impressive revision timetable which I shall spend the next three months ignoring. Next term, Trinity term, brings so many distractions. The balls! The punting! Productions of 'Hamlet' in the pouring rain! CRASH deadlines . . . And very soon I shall be appearing in ZZAP! too, doing battle with the enemy via a Commodore and disc drive (apologies to all you Spectrum purists, but someone has to pay for all the balls and punting).

FRONTLINE may have a title which suggests the battlefield, and it's true that nearly all of the games I've had for review since I started have been wargames, but I am supposed to be here to cover strategy games as well. That is, strategy games other than wargames; and these have not been very inspiring in the past. One thinks of the bannana republic, of starving or revolting peasants, of general election and taxes. One thinks of *Football Manager* and, though hopefully not too hard, of *The Great Space Race*. These are the sort of games which can be played in terms of simple numerical input. Yes/No responses and multiple choices, and they are on the whole momentously unsatisfying. A lot of imagination has to go into the concept to make the numbers meaningful and the objectives the strategy achieves interesting to the player; getting these factors right made *Football Manager* a playable and addictive game. *The Great Space Race*, in contrast, is a complete failure because of the confused mass of irrelevant statistics it generates in response to a minimum of player input, and the tangled, open-ended rewards offered. The limited-input statistic game can benefit greatly from good design but it can never be a living, moving work of computer entertainment. The format has limited potential.

Theoretically, however, strategy needn't mean bannana republics or wargames only. There is potential within the standard wargame format to treat a different scenario, which is an area of gaming almost entirely unexplored and undeveloped. Adventure games are quite often fantasy or science fiction - 'whodunnits' and related thrillers might these days be added as a third standard background - but there are certainly a fair number of notable exceptions which treat 'alternative' plot-lines. The novelty and quite often the humour of these - *Hampstead*, for instance - can be extrememly appealing; and, what is more important to the software producers, commercially successful. The comparison between wargames and standard adventures isn't exactly a parallel one, because adventures are related to written literature and wargames are specifically designed to simulate battle situations. Any other concept which rides on the back of the 'cardboard counters' set-up will probably seem artificial; wargames also define their own conclusion and reward by their closed, combative gameplay, and this might be rather hard to transfer to an alternative context.

But what is a strategy game anyway? It is not merely a game which requires the use of the mind rather than the reflexes to play successfully. *Marsport* and its companion games are solveable, not zappable, but have a solution which is arrived at by working out an inter-connected set of puzzles and involves the player in no subtle decision making. At the other extreme the cheerfully genocidal *Uridium* needs some careful thinking and planning to play well; shooting the waves of wotsits is easy, it's working out an individual approach to each level, and deciding which to go for and which to leave alone, that gets the highest scores and makes the gameplay satisfying and involving.

Decision making is a fundamental component of a strategy game. In *The Great Space Race* it is the only component, which probably demonstrates the point as well as any; nobody would deny that, however appalling, *TGSR* is a strategy game. Wargames require the player to make many subtle decisions every game turn, balancing risks, preserving supply, and, in some games, spending resource points. It would be possible - not easy, but game designing is not easy - to construct a game which was neither too closely based on the potentially stifling wargame format, nor of the branching bannana republic type. There are certainly board games which present some intriguing ideas, and could be adapted and enhanced to the computer; the old-fashioned, eternally-valid games like *Monopoly* and *Diplomacy* and the newer, more complex systems like *Illuminati*. It's true that some of these rely on diplomatic interaction, but there must be some ideas, suitable to the computer, which don't.

Time to return to Middle English and Shakespeare. Next month, if I survive this weeks revision programme, I'll be complaining about the Software Scene.

BATTLEFIELD GERMANY

Producer: PSS
Price: **£12.95**
Author: **Cybercon Enterprises**

It seems to me that PSS produce two types of game; one blandly well-presented, fast and playable with a pretty awful but nicely-written arcade sequence, and the other uneven, unexpected in content and vaguely unprofessional. *Annals of Rome*, which I liked a lot, was of the latter type, and so is this game, most inappropriately entitled *Battlefield Germany*. Here we have no real-time gameplay, no arcade sequence, and precious little machine code. What we do have is a literal, cumbersome simulation of a board wargame, envisaging a mostly conventional war between NATO and the Warsaw Pact.

The explanation of the scenario is brutally exact, given as it is in the form of a countdown dated to begin next summer. Iran wins the war with Iraq, which seems reasonable. What seems unlikely (to me, anyway) is that Egypt also comes under Islamic law and an Islamic pact is formed – this then invades Israel. The superpowers intervene and the situation escalates to full-scale conventional war in Europe. The point of dating this account of the escalation so close to home is presumably to shock the player into a sense of immediacy. This has worked to some extent as, at least superficially, it has an air of uneasy credibility about it. The atmosphere created by reading this while the game loads is dispersed somewhat by the first appearance of the game on the screen, and soon evaporated entirely in the fifteen-minute ▶

wait before play.

The map is hex-based rather than square, which in theory is a good idea as it allows for equivalent movement in six directions. In practice, the hex composition of this particular map seems to waste a lot of space. The main playing area scarcely fills half of the screen at once, and is 'jagged' around the edges to avoid half hexes. A small representation of the entire playing area of Central Europe shows where units are deployed; this would be more useful if it were possible to tell from the tiny dots which units belonged to which side, as it is difficult to get a sense of location from the main, scrolling map and I found it wasn't easy to keep track of how my forces were moving overall. Nothing on the map is identified by name, although each hex is some sort of terrain type including the cities which are vital for victory points, and this is the major reason why the map looks and feels anonymous and unexciting.

The game makes no visual appeal to the intellect or the imagination. Cities have no chance of becoming real cities with populations and histories; they're no more than 'city hexes', which take one movement point to enter and are worth 20 victory points.

The player's units and the computer's are represented by the traditional square counters depicting a sometimes unrecognisable piece of military hardware. There are seven types of unit in *Battlefield Germany* and it takes a bit of working out at first to decide which is which, as the works of art are not reproduced in the rulebook. Each unit has a set of statistics which is displayed to the right of the screen, and define in interesting detail attributes like combat strength, fatigue, efficiency, supply and movement points. The information is presented cryptically but clearly, this is a good thing, as frequent reference to the rules is initially necessary. Units can be stacked four to a hex, and the statistics of all units in a hex are displayed when the cursor is moved into it. This is all interesting and satisfying, and reminiscent of precariously balanced cardboard counters, but the effort which has been put into detailing the statistical definition of the counters seems to have been at the expense of any other sort of detail giving life to the board. The units are just that – counters.

I'm sure it's a psychologically-determined fact that most players when loading up a wargame for the first time choose to play 'their' side if engaging against the computer. *Battlefield Germany* has its one-player and two-player game on different sides of the tape, and it interrupts the loading on side one to allow the player to input options: one or two player, game length, NATO or Warsaw Pact. Most players will choose NATO, for their first attempt anyway. These players will find themselves watching the screen for 15 to 20 minutes while the Warsaw Pact, which goes first, plods through its 'action phase.'





If you've played *Annals of Rome* and thought the computer took too long about its moves, then *Battlefield Germany* will drive you mad. At least *Annals of Rome*'s movements are moderately interesting to watch. *Battlefield Germany* offers nothing but a vast number of counters moving one by one through a blank landscape, and certainly on a first loading the whole process will be meaningless to the player. If you decide, after five minutes, to give up on it and go and make a cup of coffee, phone Australia or take a walk down the street while Warsaw is getting on with things, you are likely to come back to find that a minute after you left, the opposition decided to engage in combat and the computer will be smugly waiting for a key-press from you.

If anyone survives the boredom and frustration of the computer's turn, there is a further shock; a saved game position can't be loaded until that turn is over, as the player is given the option of 'advance/load/save' before carrying on. Useless to think that you can choose to play Warsaw instead next time and avoid this wait, because you must load a saved game into the same set of options.

Patience is the cardinal virtue of wargamers, and it may be true that you have to wait half an hour for a human opponent to complete a turn, but there really is no excuse for the excessive slowness of *Battlefield Germany*, particularly as occasional intervention is required by the human player, and no warning of this is sounded by the computer to wake the player up.

When the player does eventually get a chance to participate, a rapid, computer-handled 'supply phase' is followed by the action phase. This allows a free mixture of movement and combat, which I'm not sure is a good idea; some players may like the free-form, but I found it was confusing. It does at least allow victories in battle to be followed up by advances of units which were not involved in the fighting. Movement is easy and efficient, effected by means of a cursor which can select and de-select units freely and move them while their movement counter decreases to zero. As usual, certain types of terrain incur movement penalties, and these are explained in the rules. Combat can be initiated at any time during the action phase between adjacent units, and the method of doing so is clumsy and initially most confusing; any mistake results in the message 'attack aborted.'

Both sides can choose how much air support to give the attack, from a fixed pool allocated each turn, and this has a significant effect on outcome. The computer seems to be sparing of its air support supplies, and a few heavy attacks each turn will be sure to obliterate its units. Units can be destroyed or forced to retreat, and if they have no way of retreating – or if you accidently make them retreat in the wrong direction – they are vaporised, graphically.

The nuclear option is not offered in the one player game, which seems unfair; I should like to know how many people commonly play two-player wargames on their computers. It is, says the rulebook, included for authenticity more than anything else, and the way is handled is one of the few colourful features in a colourless game. The player can choose to escalate or de-escalate the level of nuclear conflict, but whether or not the decision will be implemented depends on the state of affairs on the battlefield; the ruling powers can overrule the military's wishes. If escalation is permitted, the player is allocated a certain number of warheads and may choose where to drop them (not a difficult decision, as it is easy to examine the opponents's units as thoroughly as your own). Unsurprisingly, the warhead annihilates everything in the hex, and turns it into a blackened radiation zone which takes up more movement points to enter thereafter. But, for some reason, the designers saw fit not to incorporate this interesting feature into the one player game.

The rulebook is perfectly adequate, describing the sequence of play in order and giving charts of terrain effects. It also makes clear what is a maximum level of supply and strength and the like, something too many games are inclined to leave to the player's imagination. It is well-produced in PSS's usual commendable style. I have already received letters from people who have bought this game and enjoyed it, but to be honest I can't recommend it to anyone who doesn't have a lot of patience and tolerance enough to ignore the shoddy, ragged programming. This game is dull, unwieldy and dry, and it certainly doesn't work for me.

PRESENTATION 30%
The reasonable packaging is overshadowed by the excruciating slowness of the computer's action phase

RULES 75%
Effective scene-setting and above-average rule description

PLAYABILITY 49%
The player's movement phase is efficient, the computer's is diabolical and likely to provoke a pulled plug

AUTHENTICITY 60%
The scenario is credible and the large scale mechanised anonymity of modern warfare is simulated by default

OPPONENT 50%
Aggressive but unintelligent

VALUE 45%
If this game does appeal to you then there seems to be hours of play (and waiting) in it, but £12.95 is a lot to pay for something you may dislike

GRAPHICS 40%
Clear enough . . . but very, very dull

OVERALL 42%
Limited appeal in every sense

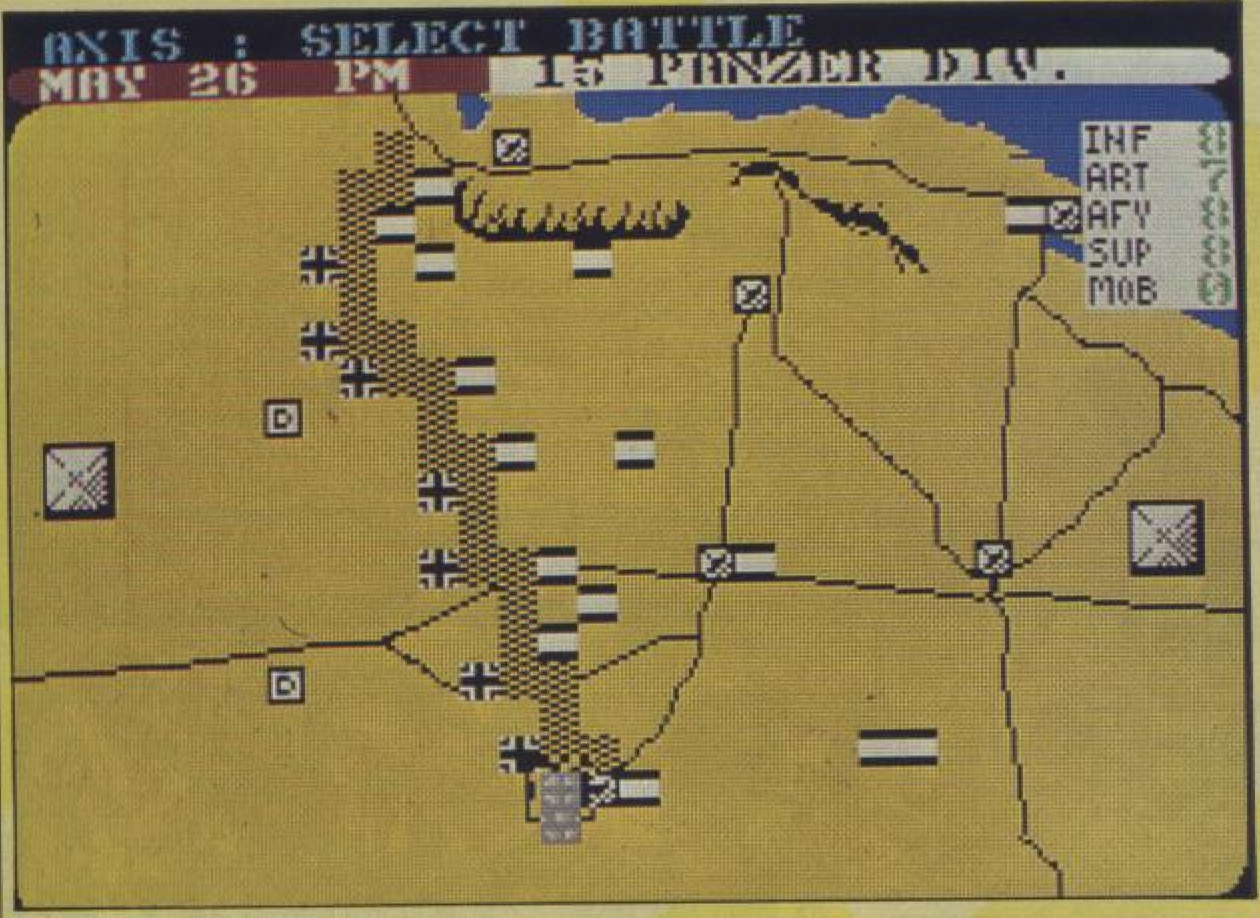


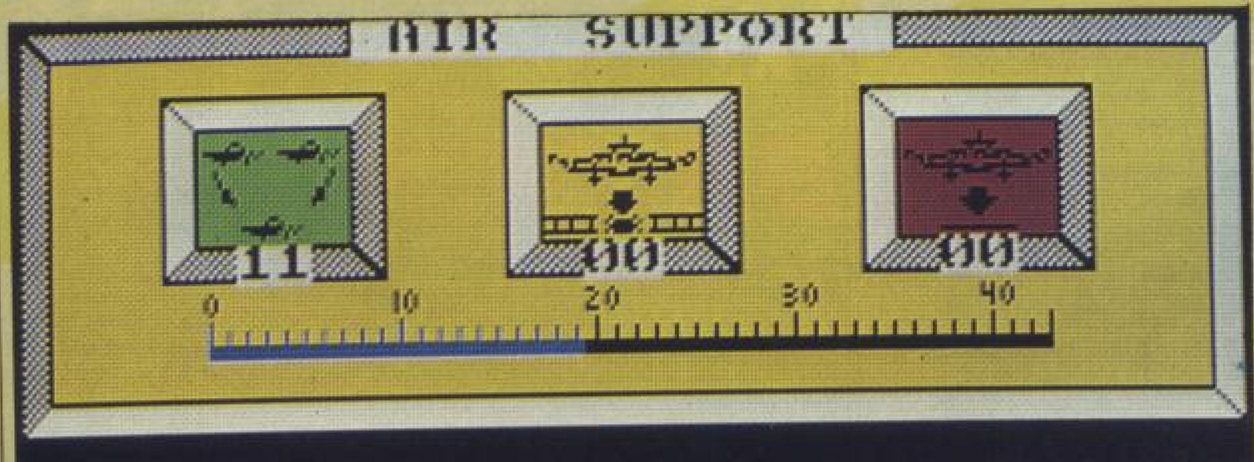
TOBRUK

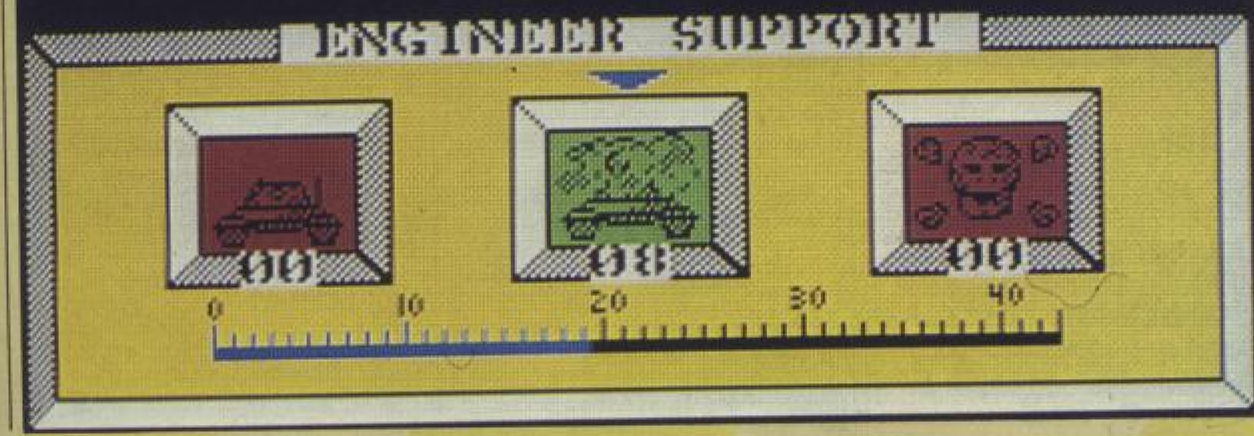
Producer: PSS
Retail Price: **£9.95**

The Clash of Armour is the subtitle of this latest game from the admirably prolific PSS, and we're in the desert once more; a locality increasingly familiar to wargamers. But there's no need to worry about getting sand in your boots playing *Tobruk*, because, as the packaging suggests, tanks are the main fighting units in this campaign.

Tobruk is a medium-range simulation of Rommel's attempt to break through a vast minefield laid by the Allies in North Africa between Gazala and Bir Hachieim to defend Tobruk, a key Mediterranean supply point. By medium-range I mean that it doesn't recreate a single battle, nor does it present the player with a long-term extended campaign. The action covers a little over a month, starting on May 26th 1942, and combat is resolved in a single turn. The aim, when playing against the computer – as the Axis side, for you do not have a choice – is to capture as many of the Allied oases as possible. Tobruk, up at the top right-hand corner, is the ultimate goal.







The main display map is a visually uninspiring representation of Cyrenaica, with the Gazala Line – the Allied minefield – cutting the desert in half. According to the rulebook the minefield was only half-completed when the offensive began, and it is presumably because of this that there is a way round the bottom of the line. The Axis troops begin the game on their side of the line, and all the oasis targets – and the Allied forces – are on the other. Identification of every part of the map is easy, because a Com Box, similar to that in *Battle of Britain*, can be moved over any feature, whether unit or landscape, for an instant report. There are few features on the map anyway. It is sand, sand everywhere.

Enemy units can be examined by use of the Com Box just as easily as friendly units, and the defensive strength of oases is displayed too. The system is smooth to operate, easy to understand, and unambiguous. Data given on units includes their strength in terms of supply of infantry, provisions and artillery, and the number of moves the unit can make that turn.

There are two turns a day, predictably divided into Movement and Combat Phases; a Supply Phase and a Command Phase occur every second turn, at the end of the day. Units can be moved at the player's leisure by means of the Com Box, in a way which is again identical to the *Battle of Britain* system. Units do not have the option of committing suicide by passing over the minefield, unfortunately; it's treated as an impassable obstacle. Entering an enemy zone of control (for the relatively uninitiated, that means the squares immediately surrounding the enemy unit) arrests movement, though combat is not inevitable.

The Com Box doesn't let you plot out a movement further than the movement allowance of a unit, which I found a useful restriction and reminder. Movement orders are executed immediately, something else which helps in organising forces. When all units have been moved, pressing the space bar moves the game onto the combat phase. In this phase, unusually, combat is an option which has to be selected. And here, unless you've turned the thing off in the start-up menu, we hit the infamous PSS Token Arcade Sequence.

I gave my views on this in my *Battle of Britain* review in my first column. In *Battle of Britain*, which is a fast-moving, real-time game, the distinctly tacky arcade sequence did not seem impossibly ▶

out of place. In the middle of this traditional cardboard-counters strategy wargame, which has no other element of moving action, this sequence clashes stylistically on every level. As might be imagined, you are put in charge of a tank. As is not so self-evident, you are presented with an icon-menu of tank functions; the gun turret, shell loading and firing and navigation.

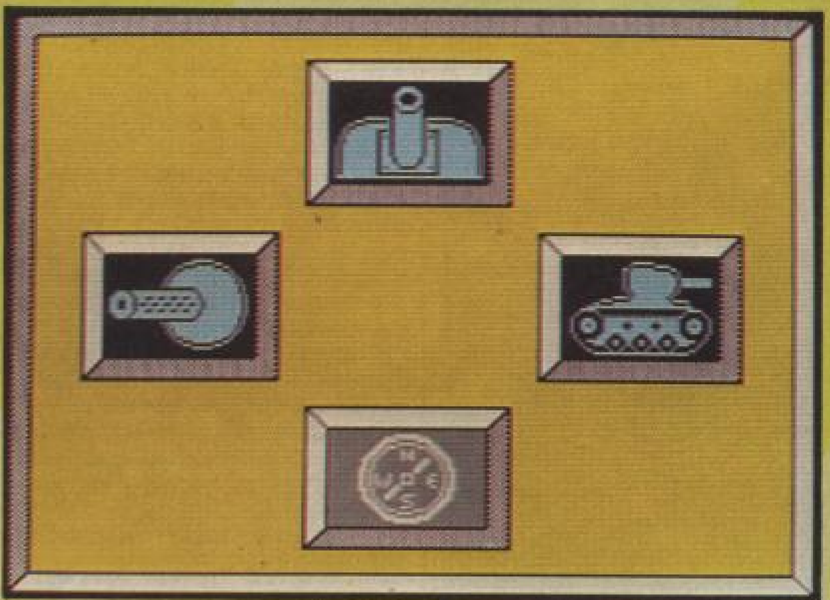
To turn the tank round you have to select the navigation mode, and trundle the vehicle about defenceless while being fired upon, then switch hurriedly to the gun turret to fire back without being able to move. I found I was just able to pick tanks off by firing shells at them, because the shell-firing mode allows some mobility. The whole thing is stunningly badly designed and unplayable. It has quite an attractive on-screen appearance, in contrast to the main body of the game, and bears all the hallmarks – though I don't know the inside story – of quite separate authorship. *Tobruk* loads with the arcade sequence deselected, and I would advise you leave it like that.

Unless you're trying the arcade sequence, combat is resolved speedily and simultaneously and retreats and surrenders reported. Units always seem to surrender; you aren't given the satisfaction of a 'division completely obliterated' report. The supply phase follows, and the player is asked to decide which units will receive the limited resources available. The importance of supply in a desert war is emphasised by the fact that the Axis forces have to trundle their mobile supply bases after their forces, and protect them from the enemy. This factor adds a lot of interest to the gameplay, because if both of the supply dumps are destroyed – and they *are* extremely vulnerable – the Axis side automatically loses.

The command phase moves onto another screen, where strategic disposition of resource points is decided. Points can be put into things like AFV (armoured fighting vehicle) recovery to minimise losses after battle, and, importantly, into ground strikes and mine laying or lifting. Putting a sufficient number of points into mine lifting allows the Axis side to make a neat break in the Gazala Line, to get some of the slower-moving units through quickly. Ground Strike allows the choice of one bombing target, which may or may not have moved by the time the order is executed.

The instruction booklet is neatly printed and entirely adequate, providing a short but informative summary of the historical situation and guiding the player briskly through the mechanics of the game. There is, however, a lack of obviousness in the layout which makes particular things difficult to find afterwards, but there are lists of the units and their properties, command points and their strengths, and the obligatory bibliography to show that the designer has done his research.

Tobruk is easy to pick up, quick to play, and devoid of long-term interest. There are no skill levels, which is a serious omission, and on my first bungling attempt, when I was just trying to pick up the rules and wasn't sure exactly what I was doing until a couple of turns in, I won. The game has a bit of a hook in its very smoothness and simplicity of objective, but despite the strategic trimmings of the command phase, there's nothing in it to satisfy for more than an afternoon.



PRESENTATION 80%
The game runs smoothly and without interruption, unless you count the arcade sequence . . .

RULES 70%
Adequate – rather unatmospheric

PLAYABILITY 70%
Mildly attractive in the short term, and very easy to start playing

AUTHENTICITY 69%
Lacking in that elusive quality, atmosphere

OPPONENT 60%
They need to be woken up, and even then they do very little

VALUE FOR MONEY 55%
With no skill levels you get little mileage for your money

GRAPHICS 69%
Uninspiring. The arcade graphics are better.

OVERALL 65%
Not a bad game, but not particularly interesting either.

FRONTLINE



FORUM

I've been overwhelmed by the volume of mail I've received this month. Keep the letters coming! I'm only sorry that severe lack of space allows me to print only two or three. The non-appearance of 'Briefing' last month was entirely my fault; my reviews were too long, and the powers that be at CRASH Towers obliterated it. I'll try to make sure it doesn't happen again! Many thanks to several people who wrote with instructions for *Chaos*. I'll be passing them on.



BRIEFING

I've had a lot of tips in this month's mail for various games, including some from Andrew Bezant **of Croughton for a game called** *Just Imagine* **which I thought nobody but myself had ever played and enjoyed! Andrew advises pricing all games at £15.00 and buying the most expensive packaging and artist. Later on, not to take the pirates to court but to join the anti-pirate movement, and to give CRASH a sneak preview of mega-hits.**

Paul Gregory of Portsmouth and **Veronica Leung**, who does not send an address, have sent in advice for playing *Swords of Bane* . . .

It's better to buy wizards with staffs.

Surround your wizards with heavily-armed troops, allowing space for them to shoot through, and attack the demons with them at long range.

In the village Scenario pack troops inside the house to create a bottleneck; the opposing warriors will surround the building but they will only be able to attack the entrance one at a time and the wizards can fire at will while they tackle your warriors. Eventually the fire demon will join the fight, and he can be picked off.

In the Forest Scenario arm most of your side with spears. Wizards cannot be used effectively because of the large number of obstacles.

Finally a telex has arrived from Churchill to all hackers. 'URGENT . . . STOP . . . SEND POKES TO STOP CRIPPLING LOSSES IN ARMOURED BRIGADES WHILE MOVING OR TRAVELLING . . . STOP . . . POKES WILL ALLOW ALLIES TO TAKE OFFENSIVE AGAINST WELL DUG IN AXIS FORCES . . . ' My knowledge of BASIC stops at LOAD "". Are there any enthusiastic hackers out there willing to have a go at *Desert Rats* and help **K J Care** of Birmingham?

SOFTWARE CLASSIFIED

Dear Philippa,
I'm pleased to see that the new broom intends to begin her clean sweep by examining the relationship between 'strategy' and other software classifications.

At the most popular extreme are 'arcade type' games, demanding hot reflexes and quick thinking. The action is fast and furious with little in the way of overall plan – eg *Uridium*, *Xevious* and *Lightforce*.

Change the player into a character within various atmospheric scenarios and one has the making of an 'adventure.' Here, the attributes of different localities involve the player in the hunt for clues to solve puzzles and sub-plots – red herrings typically abound. While an overall plan may be helpful, it is usually only incidental to the enjoyment involved in the game. The real 'winner' is the player who roams the author's world, rather than seeking to solve or complete the game (eg. *Lord of the Rings*, *Bugsy* and *Kayleth*).

Purists demand that a strategy game should have a definite objective, requiring the player to formulate short-term tactics and plans. It requires time for reflection and planning, usually involving game turns to break the game down into manageable sections. The explicit accompanying rules and guidelines should allow for a certain amount of logic and predictability, requiring the player to call upon great depth of thought as in *Arnhem*, *Desert Rats* and *Vulcan*.

Although my personal favourites are pure strategy games, some deviations do provide an entertaining mix. *Lords of Midnight* cleverly brought together aspects of both adventure and strategy in a unique manner. *Rebelstar* is an excellent mix of arcade and strategy, combining the best parts of both classifications. Here, the player has plenty of time to study his moves, but when the action starts it is fast and very graphic – a winning combination. If only the gameplay of *Rebelstar* could be applied in a different wargame scenario (for example, cavalry guarding a small laager of wagon trains against attacking Indians, or perhaps the British defending a fort in the Zulu wars . . .)

Unfortunately, pure strategy games tend to appeal only to a minority. Perhaps the clever mix of strategy and other classifications is important if wider appeal is to be established and the genre kept alive.

Mr F D Beilby, Doncaster

All successful games have some strategy in them, as you can see when you examine even the most mindless of terribly addictive games. As a pretentious English student I'm heavily into defining genres, and I'll be talking more about this next month!

PI

STRATEGY OR ADVENTURE

Dear Philippa,
My interest in strategy and wargaming game began with *Lords of Midnight*, an adventure game which contained a considerable amount of strategy. Despite the fact that it was the adventure part that attracted me to it, I found the strategy route much more entertaining.

There is a very subtle blend between strategy and adventure in my opinion: for, in an adventure, an intelligent strategy is needed. A strategy game is a complicated adventure on a larger scale, with more possibilities and eventualities.

I think the blend between fantasy strategy is even greater, as they both usually centre around a quest (good and evil), and an individual as opposed to an army (the final point is not as strong as the rest, but the three principle fantasy games, *Lord*, *Doomdark* and *Swords of Bane* are 'individuals' games).

I must agree with Ally Hume about a strategy game creator, but I do see your point about weakening the market. Although some excellent games may be produced, I think there could be many duff ones produced.

I would also like to congratulate you on your excellent column. You have already equalled, and maybe even surpassed, Angus and Sean.

Duncan Maclean, Newcastle

PS I was wondering about purchasing CCS's *Vulcan* and LOTHLORIEN's *Death in Russia*. Are either of these worth buying, or can you suggest better?

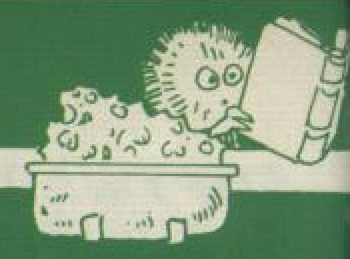
Vulcan *is certainly worth buying, but I'm afraid I don't know anything about* Death in Russia*! I think that* Lords of Midnight *is nothing more than a cardboard-counters wargame with pretty pictures, not an adventure at all – I'm surprised how few people have realised that! It's a work of art though . . . a classic of computer software.*

PI



Duncan sent me this picture of what he thinks I dress like in my leisure time . . . let's hope they don't see this in Oxford

CRASH COURSE



by Rosetta McLeod



BUSINESS IN THE CLASSROOM

CASES COMPUTER SIMULATIONS have produced a range of educational software programs covering a variety of subject disciplines, including 'minority' subjects such as agriculture and political studies. The programs follow a set format, involving assimilating a wealth of information, and using it to make correct decisions at critical moments. Relevant information is presented in a variety of ways: bar charts, histograms and maps are used to very good effect, and maintain the players' interest throughout. Different levels of difficulty are also offered, and the games can be used by one player at a time or by small groups working in competition.

Aimed at older pupils and college/university students, these programs are realistic simulations of real-life situations, providing the user with valuable practice in the application of their acquired knowledge. Schools and Colleges are placing more and more emphasis on the importance of information skills, and **CCS**'s range of educational software certainly fills a gap in the market – there are very few educational programs available for college students, and fewer still for the minority subjects.

The programs are all for the 48K Spectrum and cost £5.95 each. They can be obtained from; **CASES COMPUTER SIMULATIONS**, 14 Langton Way, London SE3 7TL.

AIRLINE

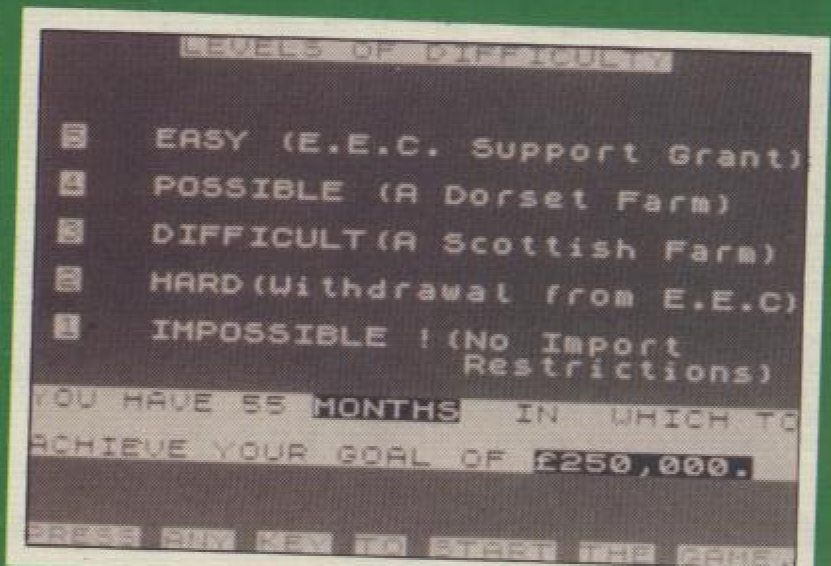
If it's your ambition to be the chairman of a large company, now is your chance to assess your potential. In this simulation, you adopt the role of chairman of L-Air, an airline which starts up business with £3 million. You have 7 years to increase your net assets to the £30 million necessary to take over British Airways! You have to decide on the number of aircraft to operate, whether to buy or charter, the level of staffing and maintenance necessary, the duration of fuel contracts and when to repay loans.

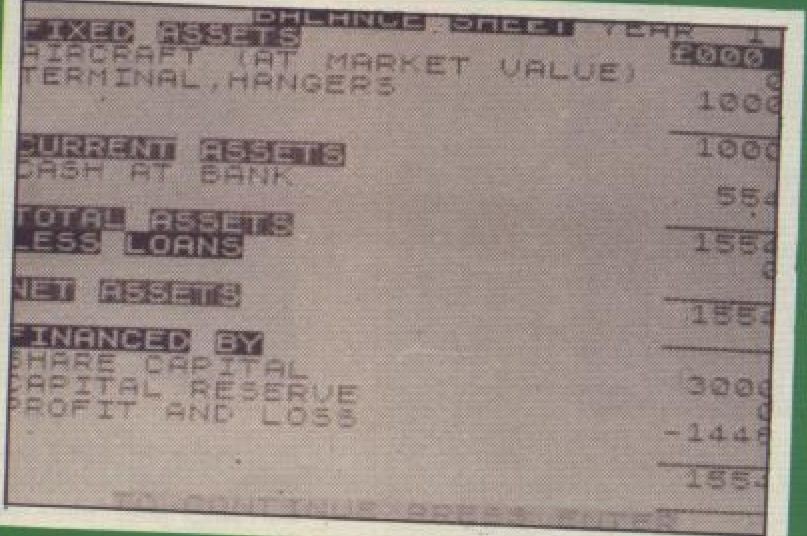
Problems encountered include tax demands, increases in fuel costs, and loss of revenue resulting from cancelled flights, strikes, hijacks, air crashes and sabotage.

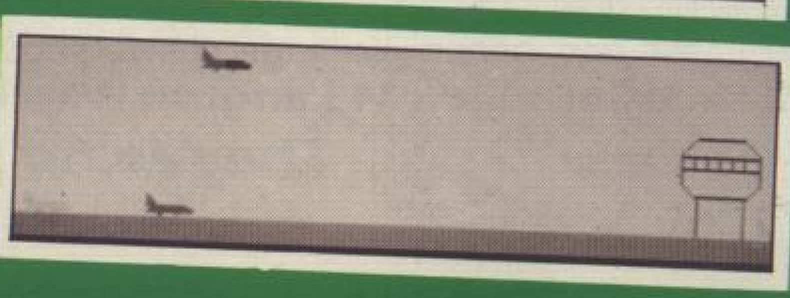
The information is presented through histograms, bar charts and graphics. The first chart displayed is a bar chart showing a forecast of the passenger payload for each level of activity. Using this information, the player must decide on the best aircraft to use, and then finalise his choices after looking at the level of revenue expected. When this is above normal, it may be cheaper to borrow money and buy aircraft instead of chartering.

The market rate for each DC10 is £10 million, and when aircraft are purchased for more than this amount, the additional cost is debited against the capital reserves, thus reducing net assets. Crew costs are fixed at £50,000 per DC10 while the cost of maintenance is £90,000 for each aircraft. Results of trading are shown in the form of profit and loss accounts and balance sheets.

The graphics are excellent, and the player's interest is maintained throughout by the constantly changing information – you can even read Financial Times reports and receive Telex messages. If you succeed in reaching the target of £30 million, then perhaps Richard Branson may have a rival!







CORN CROPPER

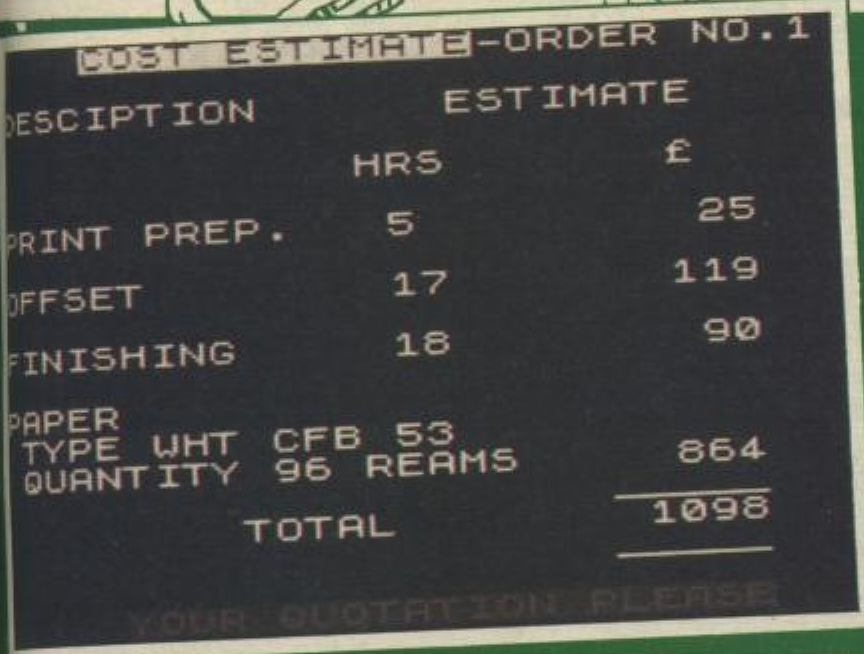
Aimed at students of Geography or Agriculture, *Corn Cropper* is a simulation of a commercial wheat farm. The player begins with cash resources of £50,000, 30 acres of rich arable land, a tractor and two farm workers. He must then build up his assets to £250,000.

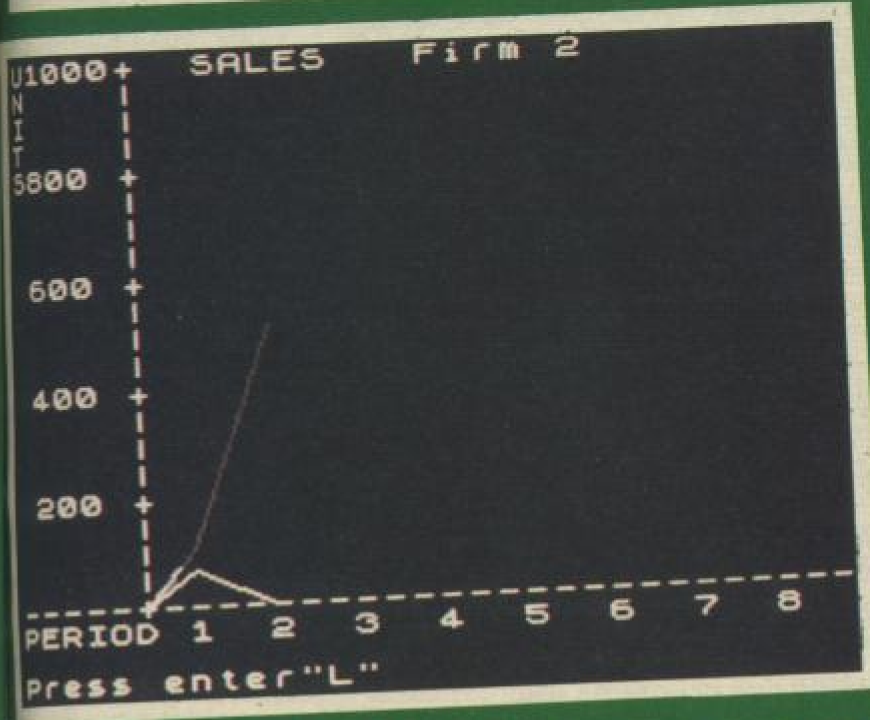
The menu allows the user to call up information of different types: the weather forecast shows the likely rainfall and average temperature for each month, but – as with all weather reports – this cannot be relied upon totally; the crop status histogram shows the stage of growth that the crops have reached, together with information on whether or not a fertiliser has been used; a farm map, showing the cultivated areas, must be referred to before decisions to plant are made; and the cash account shows the monthly expenditure and receipts. All in all, a wealth of information must be accessed before the player decides to take any action.

A report is shown at the end of each month, detailing the results of the decisions taken. Unforeseen problems arise from time to time, including such disasters as frost damage, rats eating the seed corn, and even the dreaded fire. The accompanying notes include some useful hints: players are told for instance, that crops need an optimum level of water each month, and that fertilising two month old crops doubles the yield.

The program contains five levels of difficulty, providing students with a very realistic and comprehensive simulation. It certainly drives home the point that farming is a highly technical and specialised industry! *Corn Cropper* is currently used for the secondary school Geography syllabus and in Agricultural Colleges. Amazingly enough, a French version is also available!







OLIGOPOLY

According to my dictionary, 'oligopoly' means "a market situation in which control over the supply of a commodity is held by a small number of producers, each of whom is able to influence prices and thus directly affect the position of competitors."

This game is a management simulation for one to six players, and the objective is for each participant to create wealth at a faster rate than his competitors. The computer gives each player a balance sheet for the year, generates a forecast for demand and costs, and tells each manager about the capital goods industry.

Using the computer's information on price, production, marketing, research and development, new equipment and dividends, the managers have to make decisions. When each has done so, the computer compares these and displays two reports for all firms. Results may be kept secret by agreement, as the program includes the option of using a printer for annual reports, forecasts and newsflashes.

A bar chart compares the share values for each firm, and a pie chart shows each firm's share of the market. Occasionally, news of imports, overtime and changes in taxes may be flashed up on screen, and this new information may make it necessary to alter decisions.

A duration of between 2 and 50 years is selected before play begins, and a useful feature is that even if a game were to be played twice with exactly the same decisions, the results would be likely to differ as the computer generates random factors. I also like the way in which shareholders demands have to be taken into consideration as the managers decide how much of their profits to share with them! If you think you have entrepreneurial skills, try them out with *Oligopoly*!

PRINT SHOP

A simulation aimed at Business Studies students, *Print Shop* covers a period of 12 weeks in which the student becomes sole proprietor of a small printing works. The prospective businessman is asked to make judgements on the following: the number and category of staff to employ; the amount and type of paper to purchase; the quotation for each job and the scheduling of work in an optimum week. The objective is to produce a net profit of over £4,000 in the first three months of trading, making decisions based on the weekly trading accounts, profit and loss, and balance sheets.

A great many factors must be taken into account when, for example, hiring staff. A supervisor must be employed for every five production staff, and new premises are required (at double the rent) when this number rises to ten. It has to be remembered that additional staff will be needed when orders start to increase, but as it takes three weeks to train new employees, production will not increase immediately. It may therefore be necessary to contract out certain jobs.

This is a particularly good simulation, in which students have to make a large number of decisions after having assessed a wealth of information. The information is presented clearly both on the screen and in the brief accompanying notes. There are three levels of difficulty, but I'm afraid I wasn't even successful at the easiest of these – to be honest, I managed to incur losses, which resulted in the net assets becoming negative. The banker foreclosed and the business ceased!

Print Shop certainly tests your business acumen to the full, and creates a feeling of true involvement in the world of commerce. An enjoyable and challenging program.

SUPERPOWER

Superpower is a strategy game showing the superpowers' influence over Third World countries, and is intended to supplement a Political Studies course. Each player runs the intelligence agency of a major world power, with the ultimate aim of protecting his power's assets in a continent of developing countries.

At the beginning, each player has assets in the nine Third World countries, and each is struggling to achieve the highest râte of profit growth. This might be brought about by peaceful strategies, such as building a defensive alliance among the strong countries, or by more aggressive means such as encouraging nations to nationalise a rival's assets. A variety of information is available: a report on any country shows its stability, wealth, foreign relations and government spending; a comparison can be obtained between nations in terms of industry, debt and government spending; or a study can be made of a superpowers' assets table. This information should help the player to make decisions, including what to do about investment, foreign policy, taxes and the armed forces.

Annual budgets must be adhered to, and the players must therefore indulge in a variety of strategies, either to maximise the growth rate of their own country or to minimise that of the others. A player might, for example, find himself weighing up the arguments and counter-arguments for persuading a friendly nation to spend more on welfare. While this might reduce expenditure on the hated police force, it could mean that the country is left unprotected from coup or assassination attempts.

A detailed understanding of political theory is a pre-requisite for the successful tackling of this program, but it is useful in extending a student's depth of understanding.

MANAGE

This is an interactive management game for two players which can be used to supplement a Business Studies curriculum. Alternatively, it could have a part to play in management training and economic studies. The aim is to teach the users, by placing them in a role-playing situation, about the significance of pricing policy and the correct allocations of cash resources.

Participants begin with £7,601 in cash, and 71 units of stock valued at £35.35 each. They must then make decisions covering the price of goods, marketing expenditure, production/research costs and plant additions. The results of trading are shown by statements and by a line graph of orders and sales.

An excellent feature is that the players' decisions interact with each other, leading to a strong element of competition. It's interesting that players are forced to make immediate decisions, while always bearing in mind the long-term objectives for improving the performance of the company.

Although no detailed financial knowledge is required, it is assumed that players will be able to assimilate the fairly detailed information supplied. The game may be played with or without a printer, but if one is used, the results are not displayed on the screen, thus ensuring the confidentiality of information, and making things more difficult for an opponent!

The instructions are clearly explained on the inlay, and as this game does not depend on luck, the winner can be sure that it is his knowledge and acumen which has made him successful!

COMMENTS

Control keys: clearly explained and kept as simple as possible
Keyboard play: very good
Graphics: sensible use of graphs and tables in most programs. The graphics in Airline **are particularly good**
Use of Colour: limited
General rating: interesting and realistic simulations of different business situations, useful for encouraging the users to handle a wealth of different information

WINNERS & PRIZES



FANATICAL FIREBIRD

FIREBIRD were offering all their Silver Range in Issue 38 to one winner, and for once it's a girl: **Miss G Hinton** from Staffs, WS12 4BP. That's a lot of playing you've got there! 200 runners up each receive a copy of *The Helm*. Take a deep breath and get out your magnifiying glasses!

J D Field, W Yorks, WF13 4NB; Raymond Philson, Northern Ireland, BT47 2BX; Billy Attridge, Norfolk, PE30 4SG; Daniel Nicholson, Norfolk, PE38 0PB; Phillip Andrew Buckley, Skelmersdale, WN8 6AH; P Miller, Bedford, MK40 2LB; C R Dane, Kent, ME13 9TE; Chris Whaley, Surrey, CR4 1ND; Matthew Bond, London, N18 1PS; Maxwell Patrick, Sheffield, S30 2RD; Julian Fernandez, Surrey, CR4 1XF; Mark Marshall, Lancs, PR5 4RD; Carl Williams, Worcs, DY11 5LU; Andrew Hare, Essex, CM11 2BX; Andrew Simpson, Edinburgh, EH8 7SE; Paul Collins, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE5 4EA; Mark Vanderlinde, Northern Ireland, BT40 1HA; Roy Smyth, Northern Ireland, BT82 8BX; Simon Threasher, Avon, BS25 1HL; Paul Gardner, Bristol 5, BS5 8JJ; Eamonn Malone, London, W13 0EF; Eddie Jones, Shropshire, WV16 6AB; L Bowman, Norfolk, PE31 6AP; George Arbuckle, Scotland, ML2 9LF; Andrew King, Bristol, BS15 4TU; Helen Page, W Mids, B91 2SD; Daniel Alterman, London, N22 4YE; Paul Longhurst, Hertfordshire, HP23 4ED; Darren Wolbold, South Devon, TQ5 0HG; John Fielding, Seacroft, LS14 6LA; Mark Catchpole, Norfolk, NR6 5DE; Michael Rose, Sheffield, S37W; James McLaughlin, Sheffield, S19 6LR; Stephen Jennings, S Yorks, S10 4EQ; Terry White, Notts, S80 2SQ; Adrian Holt, S Yorks, S73 0XU; Scott Walker, Sheffield, S4 8GA; Jim Dawson, Suffolk, CB8 8RS; A E Wise, Dorset, DT11 7ER; Jason Bullock, Bucks, HP12 3UN; Christopher John Knox, Sussex, GU28 0NB; Ian Rooney, Wales, SA6 8PF; Mark Green, Dorset, BH21 7PB; Darren Haines, Southampton, SO2 1DG; Michael Tedstone, W Mids, WS10 9AN; Richard Drage, Cheshire, SK5 7QB; Arthur Mountain, Suffolk, IP12 4LL; Rob Williams, Northumberland, TS15 2HT; Philip Harrison, Sheffield, S8 7TN; Andrew L Stevens, Norfolk, NR31 0JB; Mrs C Moore, Sheffield, S12 2BN; K Bly, Coventry, CV3 6NN; Michael Evans, Avon, BA1 8BW; Mark Nielsen, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire; J Collins, Hereford, HR2 9JY; Daniel McArdale, Kent, CT15 7PF; Darren Edmunds, Ramsden, OX7 3AP; Barry Neilson, Glasgow, G13 1YF; Mike Boote, Bristol, BS14 0EJ; Robert Kirk, Nottingham, NG6 9DB; Andrew Job, S Yorks, S11 7GU; Darren Lee Moses, Maidenhead, SL6 7JZ; C Pugh, South Wales, CF41 7RE; Stephen Orbidge, Leicestershire, LE13 0LW; Steven Andrews, Dorset, BH12 2HQ; Andre (Derek) Tulip, Northumberland, NE42 6JB; Tim Bowler, W Yorks, LS10 4NB; Roger Mible, S Yorks, S30 4FP; Luke Melling, Cheshire, SK15 3EW; Richard Harris, Dorset, BH21 3EZ; Mark Cavanagh, Cheshire, SK7 3NR; Lasse Eldrup, 2650 Huidovre, Denmark; Clive Wadey, Nr Petworth, GU2 89J; Paul Green, Manchester 9, Lancs; David Whittle, Manchester, M7 9LL; D T Johnson, County Durham, DH2 3SB; L Facchini, Co Durham, SR8 5NQ; Stephen Gustard, Durham, DH1 5PZ; Robert Lorrimoreu, Essex, SS6 8NB; Simon Drew, West Sussex, BN4 4DL; B Colbran, East Sussex, BN24 5EH; Nicholas Rice, Birmingham, B37 6NP; James Say, Avon, BA2 2BJ; Jason Mabey, Somerset, BA21 4NR; Nigel Heslop, Longsight, Manchester; Chris Scott, Shropshire, TF9 4BU; Paul Cooke, Kent, ME4 5SS; T McPherson, Kent, DA11 0PA; Richard Long, Bristol, BS10 6EF; Brendon Watson, Fife, KY8 1EW; James McPhaul, Scotland, EH4 4SA; P G Byrne, Surrey, KT5 8PP; S Sharp, Nr Bradford, BDH 1NE; Stuart Brown, London, E4 8SE; Chris Faithful, Bristol, BS16 2HH; Keith McKie, Tyne and Wear, NE31 2AQ; Brian Shewan, Aberdeenshire, AB4 8TB; Philip J King, Kent, CT5 3NH; Hamsih Riest, Scotland, AB5 9YR; S C Sistern, Peterborough, PE6 ET; Martin McKenzie, Scotland, AB5 9YL; Paul Harmer, Norfolk, PE32 2PS; Colin Shaw, Aberdeen, AB2 0FD; Scott Stone, Hants, PO3 6AL; G Crockett, Herts, CM23 5AN; Simon Hill, Devon, PL9 8SG; Paul Adams, Bristol, BS17 2JH; Tony Scott, Tyne and Wear, NE38 9BT; Mrs Caroline Middleton, Sheffield, S8 9FN; Peter Willington, Sheffield, S18 6LD; Adam Playford, Manchester, M20 8WJ; S J Partridge, Cheshire, CW2 7NS; K M Ibbotson, S Humberside, DN17 2LD; Steven Maclean, Berkshire, RG3 4DQ; Alistair Crook, Leeds, LS8 2NL; P J Gough, 3 Regt AAC, BFPO 106; S Reeder, HQ 4 Ordbn, BFPO 15; Mike Barnes, Surrey, SH4 4ET; Stephen Wright, Surrey, SM3 8E6; Tony Predgen, Berkshire, RG11 3TB, David Madeley, W Yorks, WF8 2RZ; Neil Brunton, Tyne and Wear, NE38 7HD; Adrian Malone, Tyne and Wear, NE28 9JR; Martin Lambell, Devon, EX2 9NE; John Hartley, W Yorks, WF3 3JQ; Kristian Bird, S Humberside, DN3 7PN; K Parsons, W Yorks, BD4 9PL; Adrian Bradshaw, Kent, ME20 7HN; Timo Hilton-Jones, London, W5 3JR; David Nijs, Merseyside, L44 4EH; Howard Rothwell, Merseyside, L31 3HB; Jason Missey, Kent, CT9 3LP; Xenoph Larg, Scotland, KY6 1AS; E Ajoes-Osemobor, Kent, BT2 8HU; Steve Dodd, Doncaster, DN4 9SN; A J Whitfield, South Glamorgan, CF6 2SA; Adrian Hearty, Merseyside, L37 2YZ; Bonny Onwidiwe, Liverpool 8, 0RT; Martin O Donnell, W Yorks, LS19 7EY; Paul Dungey, Cornwall, TR10 8QJ; Lee Maunder, Cornwall, PL12 4LF; Marc Treneman, Devon, PL3 5AE; Edward Evans, Birmingham, B30 2XB; Alastair Cushion, Cornwall, PL31 2PN; Gary McDiarmid, Angus, DD7 6DS; Claire Hill, Cornwall, TR7 3EB; Scott Kimber, Cornwall, TR6 0BN; Hedley Hadfield, Derbyshire, B47 6QL; Gary Malvihill, Co Cork, Eire; John Turner, Sheffield, S10 2DY; Stephen Green, Kent, TN16 3QF; Jonathon Holloway, Hants, PO4 9AA; Bill Lepper, Devon, PL7 3QX; Paul Tinker, Nottinghamshire, S81 0NR; Stuart Nicoll, Dundee, DD2 5QP; Peter Lay, Liverpool 13, L13 4DJ; Master Steven Templeman, Leeds, LS2 2JG; Marvin Broady, Northumberland, NE63 8EE; Paul Smurthwaite, Aberdeenshire, AB4 7XR; J Astrop, Bucks, HP14 3PX; Paul Brown, North W Yorks, YO18 8SE; Darren Hannant, Essex, RM2 6EJ; Vincent Prior, Essex, IG3 9HD; Graham Williams, W Yorks, WF8 2RN; Gary Hughes, Lincoln, LN1 1LA; Caroline Mann, Leeds, LS13 4JR; Andrew Smith, Essex, SS13 3ND; Richard Taylor, Cheshire, SK17 4RT; Hayley Tuttlen, Norfolk, WR5 8XE; M L Browne, Norwich, NR13 3RN; K Farman, Suffolk, NR32 2NG; Glyn Hepplestone, S Yorks, S70 3DE; Dave Prosser, S Yorks, DN2 6PR; A K Sykes, S Humberside, DN34 5ED; Scott Rankin, Gloucestershire, GL10 2HW; Ann Clayton Jee, Cheshire, WA2 0PG; Myron Justine Eells, Surrey, CR4 1RO; Steven Busby, London, E11 4HH; Owrang Rahmani, London, NW2 4DX, Lee Jordan, Sussex, 2BN 8QJ; Lee Macey, Norfolk, NR31 9JF; C Disley, Kent, BR8 7HX; A F New, Berkshire, RG16 9TG; Edmund Stevens, London, W4 2AF; Robin Wilson, West Lothian, EH49 7LH; John Clarke, Lincs, DN21 1DW; Brian Roscoe, Merseyside, L46 1QU; Christopher Cubbin, Liverpool L4 6UY; Jane Coachley, Cheshire, SK8 2AR; Masters Simon and Andrew Howells, Wiltshire, SP4 7JH; Philip S Cairns, Cardiff, CF5 1JU; Saul Michael John, Mid Glamorgan, CF41 7SE; F Jones, Kent, ME15 97R; Bernard Hatton, Liverpool, L13 7EN; David Churchill, Hants, SO17 PF; James England, S Yorks, DN14 9QS; Miss Maria Mitchell, Notts, DN22 7LU; Barry Roden, Wolverhampton, WV10 9NT; Simon Franks, Nr Sheffield, S6 6HY; David Johnson, Lancashire, WN8 0QE.

ADRIAN MOLE – NEW COMPS MINION

VIRGIN GAMES were looking for a new Comps Minion in Issue 38, the winner to receive a Sony Walkman. The lucky Adrian Mole Diarist is **Simon Lippmann** from Bedfordshire, MK44 IP6. Three further winners each receive a copy of *The Growing Pains of Adrian Mole* (the book), autographed by Sue Townsend. And they go to **Stephen Ward**, Co Clare, Eire; **Paul Hampson**, Beds, LU4 9GH, and **Gavin Williams**, Merseyside, LG3 2HG. 25 runners up each receive a copy of the game.

Desmond Anglin, London, N15; Nicholas Wriglesworth, Kent, CT2 9HR; Richard Jones, Hants, PO8 0TL; L Matsell, Lincs, NG31 7QY; Andrew Clipsham, Coventry, CV2 1EP; Antony Chaplin, S Humberside, DN33 2JU; Peter Cullinan, Merseyside, L12 4YJ; Howard Carlisle, Leeds, LS18 4HD; Robert Gabriel, Devon, EX15 3EN; Stephen Arnall, Coventry, CV5 7LP; Brendan Davies, North Wales, LL58 8EY; Chris Lucas, Hampshire, GU35 9EX; Richard Coates, Sheffield 5, S Yorks; Anil Seth, Oxon, OX12 9JF; Rachel Robinson, Kent, CT9 4NA; M Wilkinson, W Mids, B74 AT; Simon Gibson, Bristol, BS18 1RL; Paul Thomas, Liverpool, L13 4AD; Lynda, Christopher and David Barber, Leeds, LS25 1JD; Dean Lucas, Birmingham, B37 7BY; Paul Fradgley, W Mids, B63 2JS; James Dawson, Cambridgshire, PE16 6EJ; Jonathan Davies, Sussex, RH20 2LE; Stephen Deary, Tyne and Wear, NE10 0YN; David Johnston, Banffshire, AB4 1PZ.

SHORT CIRCUIT

Also in Issue 38, OCEAN offered 50 copies of *Short Circuit*. And the winners were:

Diogo T De Vasconcellos Esa, P-1000 Lisbon, Portugal; Mario Miguel de Oliveira, 1300 Lisboa, Portugal; Andrew Males, Herts, S92 9RN; James Fisher, Merseyside, WA11 8DE; Robert Chapman, Warley, B67 5RE; John Ralfe, London, W3; Colin Donovan, London, E16 RNJ; James Waterhouse, S Yorks, S80 2DZ; Chris Greenan, Bucks, HP22 4QQ; M J Wilson, Hants, PO12 1PU; David Edwards, Hereford, HR2 9JU; Kulbir Singh, W Mids, B69 3JU; Richard Woop, Co Clare, Ireland; Andrew Welch, Cheshire, WA15 6NL; Edward Evans, Birmingham, B30 2XB; Brian Deyle, Earlsfield, SW18 3PG; Richard Winter, Suffolk, IP14 2AN; Craig Whitaker, Herts, AL2 3DZ; S Reynolds, Suffolk, IP4 1PG; Mark Cook, Castle Bromwich, B36 0AE; Andrew Dixon, North Devon, EX31 2HU; Andrew Stevens, Norfolk, NR31 0JB; Mario Young, London, SW17 8LG; Young, Hertfordshire, WD7 8JD; Craig Spencer, W Mids, WS2 7HJ; Terry Core, Surrey, SM3 8PH; Gary Batten, Surrey, KT16 0AW; Paul Barker, Lancs, OL16 2RZ; Daniel Sartin, West Sussex, BN12 6JR; Atiff Mansur, Essex, IG2; Stuart Wilson, Lancashire, PR7 6QA; Michael Aspinall, Lancs, PR2 1EY; M Blackman, Hants, GU14 8PU; Brian Michael Carr, Essex, CM9 8BG; Paul McCool, Scotland, ML1 2LF; Raymond Mason, Hants, PO2 0DJ; Derek McDonald, Cork City, Ireland; Duncan Jarvis, Berks, RG3 5RL; Anthony Maude, Stockport, SK5 6SJ; Desmond Lloyd Anglin, London, N15 6PL; Robert Blackmore, Dorset, DT10 1AL; J Bonser, Notts, NG24 4DX; Adam Edwards, Essex, RM11 2HJ; Marc Pennington, Scotland, KY10 3PY; Joel Coupland, Milton Keynes, MK15 9AE; Daniel Bonner, Bedfordshire, SG18 9NT; Andrew Hooper, Somerset, BA10 0DA; B Parkhouse, Cwmbran, Gwent; James Brooker, Herts, SG1 1SS; Justin Merritt, Oxon, OX11 0BU.

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Talk about advertising blurb . . .

THE ADVANCED OCP ART STUDIO

Our resident artechnist FRANCO FREY, takes pallette and mouse in hand to assess the potential for this updated utility which will cost you £24.95



Back in 1985 OXFORD COMPUTER PUBLISHING LTD brought the flair of Macintosh into the Spectrum world by releasing *Artstudio*. Nobody really thought it possible to create an icon- and mouse-driven drawing utility sprouting pull down menus all over the screen, and yet programmer James Hutchby did just that, and brought the new working technique to the Spectrum.

Sadly, the program's success didn't save the terminally ill OCP, and *Artstudio* and its derivatives is marketed by RAINBIRD. They're doing a good job of too, and are now releasing an advanced version incongruously called *The Advanced OCP Art Studio* (*TAOAS* for short). Contrary to belief, this does not require a major house extension to accommodate it, but to savour all the advanced features, it is necessary to own an Interface One and Microdrive (cassette-based owners still get some benefits).

The original *Artstudio* was reviewed donkeys years ago, but to refresh readers' memories, the Features Table should be indicative of the original's power.

Cramming more features into the advanced version didn't entail squeezing more memory out of the 48K but the asking of Spectrum owners to upgrade to the 128 machine. This can be either the old Sinclair black 128K or the new Alan Sugar grey Spectrum 128 + 2. Having bought an extension lead to connect the Interface One to the Plus Two (talking of a tight squeeze . . .), the loading instructions read like a Tolstoi novel, and the sooner the program is transferred onto Microdrive the better.

All the facilities of *Artstudio* are available on the advanced version with the addition of the ZX Microdrive controls, filing facilities for user-defined Fill Patterns and Paint Brushes, Ramdisk and Scrapbook plus an extra 'arc' shape in the SHAPES menu.

THE RAMDISK

TAOAS uses part of the computer's extra memory as Ramdisk, which behaves just like a normal random access mass storage device. Files are saved in it by name and can be catalogued, loaded, saved, merged and erased in a fraction of the time compared to Microdrives. Its only problem is its volatility. Should the power be switched off, don't blame anyone but yourself. So for storage you have the choice of Ramdisk and cassette, or Ramdisk and a maximum of four Microdrives. The Ramdisk facility is available via the filing options of FILE, PAINT, FONT EDITOR and SCRAPBOOK by selecting the M-drive option.

FILING

TAOAS maintains a RAM-based catalogue of files that can be displayed and accessed without the need to read the cartridge each time. Selecting one of the above mentioned filing options, displays a storage command pull-down menu. Selecting the storage device (R,1,2,3,4) and Catalogue Cartridge, displays the available files. The required file can be highlighted and saved, loaded, merged (with the memory contents) or erased by selecting the correct function box.

Up to 49 entries can be accommodated in the RAM catalogue. New files can be created by the ENTER FILENAME option. All files are verified after saving. Apart from the screen files *TAOAS* can handle files for User-created Textured Fill Patterns. This is accessed from the FILL menu. Pattern files are automatically saved with a .pat extension, although this can be overridden (these files however will not be displayed in the Fill RAM catalogue).

Similarly *TAOAS* caters for user-designed brushes under the PAINT menu. All files here receive a .brs extension unless overridden. This leaves the user-designed Text Fonts, which are accessed in the FONT EDITOR menu. Default extension here is .fnt.

SCRAPBOOK

TAOAS provides a facility to create a library of designs which can be saved to tape, Microdrive or Ramdisk for future use. Parts of pictures, logos or special symbols can be lifted from the main screen and stored in the Scrapbook to be later pasted on to any working screen. Up to 16K of material can be stored. Access to Scrapbook is through the MISC menu.

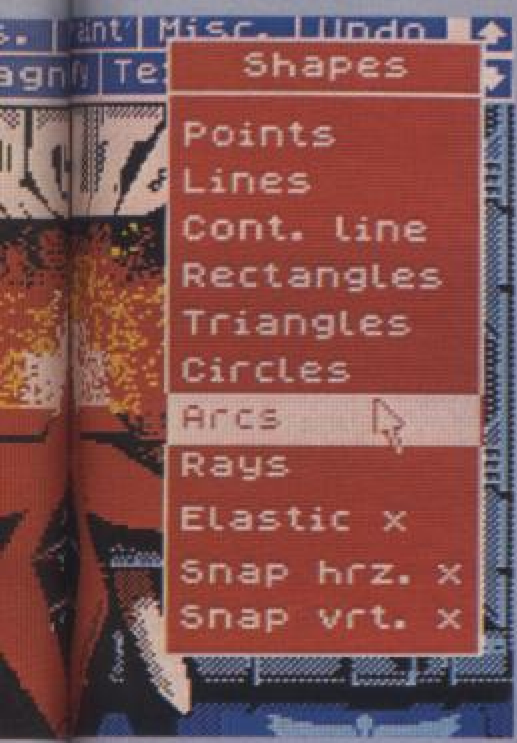


The file option enables loading and saving of Scrapbooks to and from the Microdrives or Ramdisk. The report box on the right-hand side of the screen displays the Scrapbook statistics (number of items, free memory and used memory). Scrolling through the Scrapbook is achieved by clicking the up and down arrow boxes, and enables selection of the correct design. In order to be able to lift a detail from the main screen it's necessary to define a window in the WINDOW menu



FEATURES TABLE

- Windows - icons - pull-down menus - pointing devices
- All information on screen
- Works with keyboard and Kempston, cursor, Interface 2 joysticks
- Mouse option
- Dot matrix printer dumps - five sizes plus grey-scale
- Supports 17 Centronics and RS232 interfaces
- Save and load pictures to cassette
- Full control over attributes
- 16 pens, 8 random sprays, 16 user-definable brushes
- Attribute grids
- UNDO facility
- Windows can be cleared, inverted, cut & pasted, enlarged, reduced, squashed, stretched, flipped and rotated
- Solid fill
- Textured fill - 32 user-definable patterns include stipples, hatches, bricks, roof tiles etc.
- Wash texture facility
- Three levels of magnification with pixel edit, pan and zoom
- Text - nine character sizes, two directions, sideways, bold
- Font editor - clear, invert, flip, rotate characters or whole font, copy ROM, capture font from window
- Save and load fonts to cassette
- Lines, rectangles, triangles, circles and rays
- snap and elastic shapes





before selecting the INSERT option. For paste-up it may be necessary to select one of four perimeter boxes, which provides access to any part of the main screen edges when dumping Scrapbook designs on the main screen. Delete can be accomplished on a single design or on the whole Scrapbook.

SHAPES

The ARC function has been added to the SHAPES menu. This is a fractional part of a circle. The first two points define the extremities of the arc, and the third point defines the curvature, although the arc does not necessarily link up to the third point for some obscure reason.

CONCLUSION

The Advanced OCP Art Studio is a positive extension to *Artstudio*. Ramdisk goes a long way to providing a disk-like environment to the Spectrum 128K and increases the working speed enormously. The addition of a Scrapbook enables designs to be transported without much fuss from one screen to another and makes this user-friendly package user-loving. Dimitri Koveos is responsible for the 128K extensions and has done a worthwhile addition to Mark Hutchby's original program. It makes a desirable program even more desirable . . .





THE CHEETAH MIDI INTERFACE

Once again CHEETAH have made devastating inroads into the hi-tech end of the music business with their latest product, the *Midi Interface*. Jon Bates gives it a definite thumbs-up and reckons that you will too.

Selling at well under half the price of its nearest rival, it offers eight-track real and step-time recording, merging, looping, overdubbing, patch memory, velocity, pitch and modulation memory, aftertouch, data dump, and transposing facilities. And if that isn't enough it can also act as a real-time midi echo unit.

The story goes back nearly twelve months to when it was first rumoured that CHEETAH were in the process of developing a midi interface. As it was, other projects like the *MK5* keyboard got in the path of its refinement and over Christmas they assured me that it was really going to happen soon. Well I am prepared to stick my neck out and say the wait has been worth it. It offers an awful lot for £49.95 and rivals bespoke sequencers selling for over four times the price. Okay, enough drooling – down to the program itself.

You get the usual CHEETAH type interface box, equipped with midi 'in', 'out', and 'through' plus a midi lead to get you started. The software transfers to microdrive, and on loading you get the extensive main menu. I'll try to do each department justice and talk you through it.

Real time recording is first, in sections that you predetermine from 1 to 64 bars in length – known as 'Verses.' I found this name a bit odd at first, but I quickly got used to it. The real time option is called 'Record a Verse': highlight that part of the menu and away you go, the pop-up menu appears and the border changes to magenta. You will hear a metronome beat either from the bleeper or the television set. Each first beat of the bar is emphasised and you get a two bar count-in. The beat before you need to start the border turns yellow and on the first beat of the bar to be recorded it turns red. There is a constant representation of beats executed by a quaint arrangement of flashing squares. The time defaults to 4/4 at 118 beats per minute and for a length of four bars only. At this point it should be mentioned that it has a good set of quantisation (timing correction) options from none at all to half notes (minims), taking all the triplet notes into account as well – most important if you are playing with what drum machines call 'swing' (sort of like Status Quo 'dum da dum da dum'). Having played your four bars you have several options. 'Restart' which lets you hear what you have done and add more over the top of it – if you are really confident don't stop and the whole thing will repeat anyway complete with the two bar count-in. A point to remember is that the recording process can only be halted at the end of the defined number of bars. So if you have set up 64 bars you've a longish wait. I found that you can overcome this by cranking the tempo up to full whack, tempo and quantisation being alterable in mid-flight as you go along.

'Merge' puts the recorded section into the permanent memory: 'Append' adds the recording to the current verse already set in the memory. You can also transpose up or down a semitone as you append so that the new section is in a different key. If you've fouled up the whole issue, aim for 'Quit' and start all over again.

Okay, you've started your mini-ditty. Now what? Well you will find that your first efforts have actually been entered by default into Track One, verse A. The CHEETAH package allows eight tracks, assignable to any midi channel. Each track can have up to 16 verses labelled A to P. A verse can be up to 64 bars long. That's a lot of notes. There is no need to panic about running order at this stage because at the moment all you are doing is committing sections to a track. These can be re-ordered at a later stage to complete the whole magnum opus. Duff or unwanted verses can be deleted to make more room. You can even reverse a verse – play it backwards, the notes will sound forwards (unlike reverse tape) but just played in reverse order. A verse can be shifted up or down by up to 12 semitones – that's one octave. The only thing that you can't do is endlessly improvise a solo as you are restricted to a maximum of 64 bars – depending on whether you are playing real fast and using lots of memory-extravagant things like velocity and pitch bend. These can be filtered out as you will see. Mind you, 64 bars can be quite a long time and you can chop the best bits from your sweatings over the keys and boil them down to sense the following morning as it were.

'Define Sequence Tracks' allows you to define the tracks and verses you wish to hear whilst recording new verses. Just to keep things in order you can opt to switch off a track which would be counterproductive at any point to the whole proceedings.

It has occurred to CHEETAH that we can't play as well as we think or would like, so there is a step-time write/edit option – this has to be one of the easiest note editors I have used. Notes are represented by oblongs of proportional length and the music scrolls left to right, bars and beats indicated by vertical lines. By cunning use of movable horizontal and vertical axis, notes can be deleted, added, altered or moved anywhere over a range of 11 octaves, the particular octave you are in is displayed on a mini keyboard with the name of the note displayed centre screen. It is very accurate and simple to use. In fact I guess you could step-write the exacting bits first, play them back and liven them up with a few alfresco notes here and there. The 'Playback' mode lets you here the bits you have done so far from the beginning, but you can stop and restart at any point.

When the business of committing notes to memory has finished you return to edit mode and select 'song page.' Once again utilising a very simple display, the track assembly is really easy to use. Simply move the cursor around the screen and line it up with the position you want in the track, enter the letter name of the verse (section) that should go there and that's it.

I've discovered a few hints and tips over a very long weekend with this interface. Try to map out your piece beforehand as it may save you frustration later. Keep a note of the particular sections and their track number and verse letter – if you think of it rather like an eight track recorder you will then keep the individual instruments fairly separate. Perhaps I should mention that when I ran this test I was being super extravagant and ligged a load of tone modules and synths plus a YAMAHA *CX5* music computer so I really gave it a hard time. I also found it a good idea to record the note first, correct any blunders, drop them in to the memory and then use the 'merge' option to add any program changes, pitch bend, or modulation that I might want on that track.

Simon Goodwin's Tech Niche piece failed to appear this month due to unforeseen health problems. Get well soon Simon, and speedy return . . . we'll keep you posted.

The metronome can be altered to most time signatures: although it would have no effect on the actual notes recorded, it may help you get them in time and with the right feel. In the interests of effective use of memory the program has filtering options for the incoming and outgoing data stream. You can add more and more of the data datastream to the memory: record pitch wheel, record modulation wheel, record any another sound controller, record all of the midi mode – systems exclusive and also key pressure. The latter two are very greedy on memory, and CHEETAH have a less greedy option for key velocity/pressure (I assume that here they mean aftertouch) which is called 'channel pressure.' This is useful in mono mode and saves a bit of space.

The output datastream can be similarly filtered with the addition of a status filter. Instead of continually pumping out data telling the synth what mode it is receiving in, it will only send this when a change of patch or systems exclusive is imminent.

One really useful device is the real-time midi echo. What it does is to delay the note and then throw it back to the synth just after you have played it, variable in 10ths of a second up to five seconds. As it stands it only does one repeat but I would love to see this as a separate software package which could give you multiple midi echo perhaps fading away – by juggling with note lengths in the data stream it should be possible to give a reverb effect. This would be a real first, saving tons of money on other effect units if you use midi-equipped gear.

I particularly liked the synchronisation page that allowed a selection of trigger pulses per second, namely 24, 48 or 96, as well as external control of either the midi-clock or stop and start controls. The instruction manual tells you what pins on 'Midi Through' will pick up these pulses which means that you can synchronise the whole shooting match to pre-midi sequencers, drum machines and so on. What's the betting that there will be a way to hook it up to the *Specdrum* in the near future?



All in all it is a very well thought out package, that has been economical where necessary but not to the detriment of the facilities available. The simplicity of operation makes it fun to use, it has features that rival most of the mid-price sequencers available in any music shop and what's more it's British. Say no more – get one now.

CHEETAH are moving up the jungle to: **Norbury House, Norbury Road, Fairwater, Cardiff CF5 3AS**, but can still be raised on 0222 555525.

Reviews

NEMESIS

Producer: Konami
Retail Price: **£7.95**

The inhabitants of the planet Nemesis are under attack from the forces of Bacterion. You command a protecting squadron of three space fighters in a brave attempt to destroy the invading fleet. To succeed in your mission you must pass successfully through four sections – forest, space islands, an alien graveyard and the interior of a Bacterion battle cruiser. The Mother Ship at each section's end must be destroyed before you and your squadron can pass onto the next.

Your craft flys up, down backwards or forwards. As your space craft progresses through each section you come under attack from Bacterion craft, surface walking tanks and cavern emplacements. A direct hit from an alien ship or missile causes the loss of one of your three ships.

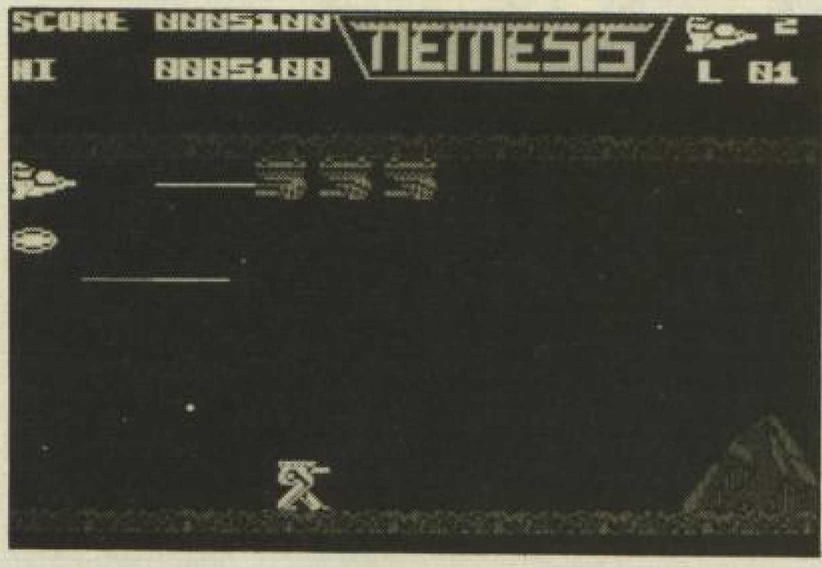
For initial protection your craft carries only a cannon, but as opposing attackers are destroyed, illuminated credits are occasionally released for collection. Each successive credit gives an increasingly powerful additional feature – extra speed, air-to-ground missiles, double (a cannon enhancement), laser, multiple fire unit and a defensive shield. As this is done an appropriate icon is illuminated at the base of the screen. Up to four speed bursts and air to ground missiles, two multiple fire units, a single shield and either lasers or double air-to-ground missiles can be carried. When a feature has been added to the space ship's armoury the icon becomes inessential. When a ship is lost all the features that it has gathered have to be collected once again.

PAUL

" Nemesis had the sort of appeal in the arcades that cost a lot of people a lot of ten pence pieces. However, the Spectrum conversion seems to have lost all the appeal of its big brother, and its lack of playability loses any of the original's addictiveness. The ship is very unresponsive to quick key presses, and collision detection is very suspect. The visual effect is ruined by the stupid scrolling stars in the background – they are very hard to distinguish from the bullets. "

MIKE

" Gosh . . . *Transmuter*'s twin brother! *Nemesis* however, is a touch less playable than its cheaper rival. It's a pity that this conversion by KONAMI is so poor, as the arcade original was both fun and addictive. The graphics are reasonably good, the backgrounds and enemy craft are nicely designed and animated, but it's a pity that your ship flickers so much. Essentially, the game is no more than an overly difficult, overpriced and mostly unplayable shoot 'em up. "



BEN

" This is a disappointment, but having seen KONAMI's Jail Break, **I'm thankful that it's not totally abysmal. The presentation is awful, response to keyboard input on the title screens is much too slow and the redefine key option leaves a lot to be desired. The gameplay is laughably different to that of the Arcade original, this is a shame as the feeling of the machine has not been captured in the Spectrum version. Without this feel,** Nemesis **is just another shoot 'em up and for near eight quid not a cheap one. "**

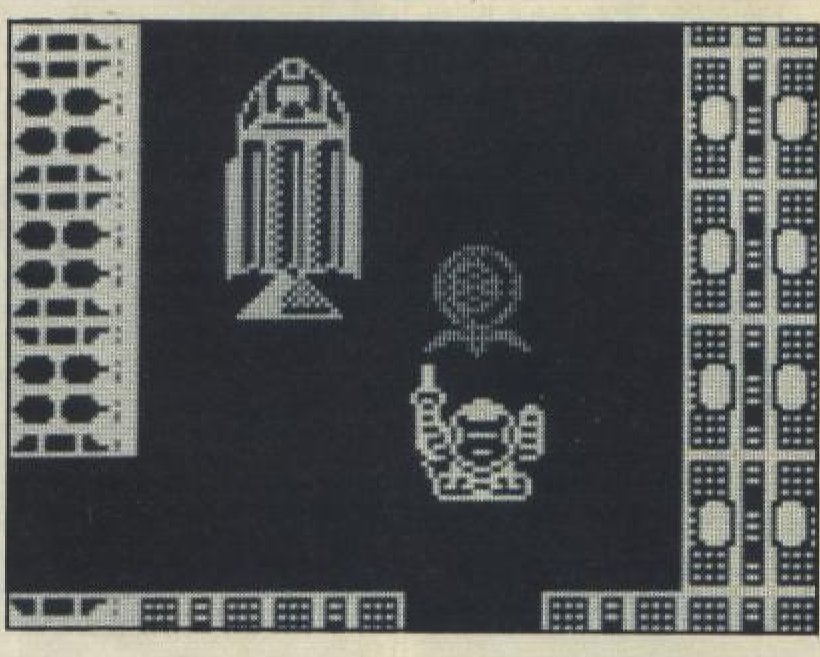


COMMENTS

Control keys: definable, up/down, left/right, fire and select required
Joystick: Kempston, Interface 2
Use of colour: fairly colourful, some clashes but not serious
Graphics: small with adequate detail
Sound: average title tune, good spot FX
Skill levels: one
Screens: scrolling play area over five levels
General rating: A disappointment for *Nemesis* addicts, largely through its implementation.

HOW TO BE A HERO

Producer: MAD
Retail Price: **£2.99**
Author: **Stuart Middleton**



Indiana Jones, Ian Botham, and Roland Rat eat out your hearts. Think you're real heroes huh, but wait until you've seen this guy action. And the guy – well he's you! There's a choice of three locations and a predicament in each – to be a hero or a gutless wonder?

In the land of Pharoahs, camels and an awful lot of sand lies an ancient tomb – and you're locked in it. An escape through its passages and rooms must be made if you're to be home in time for tea. Within the mausoleum are seven types of doors, each requiring its own key. When all seven have been unlocked out you can stagger into the bright Egyptian sun.

GARETH

" I think I like this! Nice big graphics with plenty of colour, and most characters are well defined. The nasties tend to flicker, though, which is somewhat off-putting. A neat trick is to let you select the starting level. The game's rather slow, making play a bit boring but its addiction is great. I fail to understand how deteriorating pineapples reflect your health status; is our hero a secret pineapple eater? As a shoot it if it moves game it's quite good and worth the money. "

But the museum you work for wants 24 pieces of ancient tablet collected from the tomb. Returning without them would not only look rather cowardly, but put you on the dole, and in these UB40 days, there aren't many openings for Egyptologists.

You make the decision.

Whatever you decide, you'll find some aggressive spiders, snakes and mummies after you, and your health is seriously affected by their bites. Two pineapples on the right of the screen wither when bites are sustained. Protect yourself with accurate gun fire and enjoy the bits of food left by previous explorers to see those decaying fruit restored.

Once out of the tomb, rather incredibly, you find yourself the sole survivor of a space ship uncontrollably off course. Finding and using the correct security passes opens locked doors to reach the escape craft. However a real hero wouldn't just abandon ship, he'd find the 24 pieces of circuit board required to fix the ship, bring it under control, and still have time to send a postcard home to mother. Again watch out for alien attackers, your life's in danger. Shoot them quickly and collect supplies as you go in order to restore your health.

Hero or space-wimp, the choice is yours.

Then, just when you thought that space was the final frontier, you're transported into a mutant city, searching for a vital document. The document has been torn up and hidden in (guess what) – 24 locations. Lying about the city are keys, which allow passage between buildings in search of an escape route. But escaping without the document results in a court martial and a docked pension is inevitable.

In all scenarios you can pause to save position.

MIKE

" *How to be a Hero* looks good. The graphics are big, bold and colourful, and though the aliens flicker they're quite bearable. It's essentially playable, and therefore, as it isn't too difficult, and you can select your starting level, it's pretty addictive. The instructions are too hard to read; but this doesn't ruin what is a brilliantly simple game that doesn't take any skill to understand or even to enjoy. Good for the price. "

BEN

" MASTERTRONIC's last Gauntlet variant Storm **was disappointing to say the least,** How to be a Hero **isn't much better. The action's boring, repetitive and sometimes unfair – nowadays nobody wants to search a maze for hours and then get killed because he can't fight off more than three baddies at one time. The graphics are large but simplistic, more detail could have easily been added to make the dull playing area more interesting. The sound is also below average with no tunes and sparse effects. Given that this is effectively three games,** How to be a Hero **offers reasonable value, but it's a package I wouldn't recommend. "**

▶ Seen from above, our hero in blue seeks for scattered pieces of the ancient tablet, while mummies gather in the gloom.



COMMENTS

Control keys: up/down, left/right ad fire – all definable
Joystick: Kempston, Interface 2
Use of colour: average but bold in use
Graphics: large but undetailed
Sound: no tunes, minimum variety of ubiquitous FX
Skill levels: one
Screens: three scenarios
General rating: Mixed reviewer feelings, but on the whole a simple, addictive game.

Presentation	65%
Graphics	65%
Playability	64%
Addictive qualities	69%
Value for money	77%
Overall	**70%**

THRONE OF FIRE

Producer: Melbourne House
Retail Price: **£7.95**
Author: **Consult**

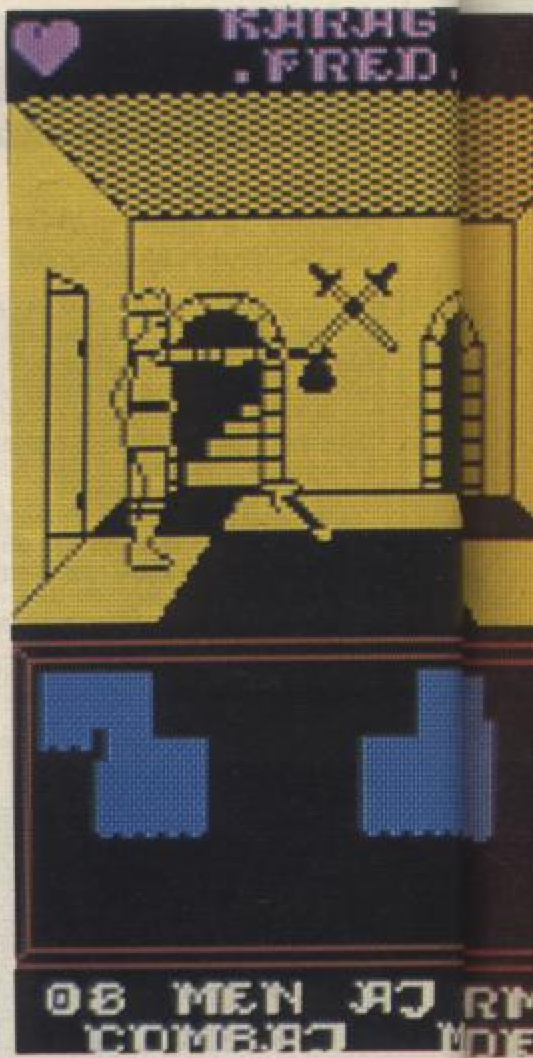
Jealousy and the desire for Power is the backdrop to **Mike Singleton**'s latest creation – Throne Of Fire. The Story tells of The Burning Citadel, a fortress high above the desolate planes of Carakesh, where stands an empty seat, the Throne of Fire, vacated by the late King Atherik. His three sons, Alorn, Cordin and Karag, desire the seat of the Throne and power of the land, and are prepared to battle it out to a bloodthirsty end.

The game can be played in two ways – either two players taking control of two of the three Princes and the computer taking the third, or a sole player taking on two computer opponents.

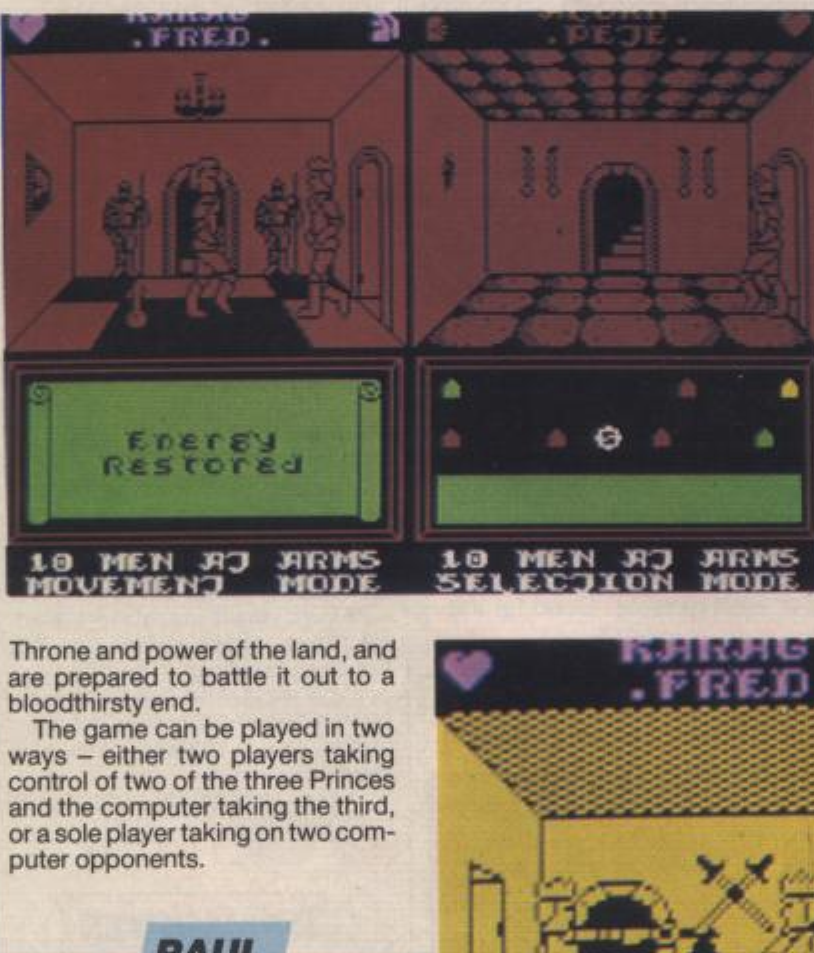
The action takes place within the 100 rooms of The Burning Citadel. The screen is split vertically from top to bottom, displaying the character currently controlled, the action window – which illustrates the movements of the characters, the castle map indicating the positions of your characters, and your additional support.

BEN

" Throne of Fire **is a good idea which has been implemented well, there is a problem though, it's much too easy to play and complete. The two player game puts the difficulty levels up, but not quite sufficiently to make it as playable or addictive as it should be. The large and beautifully animated characters and the attention to the detail of the castle help make** Throne of Fire **look exceptionally good, but that's no real surprise as** Mike Singleton **(of** Lords of Midnight **fame) had a large hand in the design of the game and its graphics. The lack of difficulty drastically spoils the gameplay of what could easily have been a Smash! "**



► **Karag decides to go it alone, while cowardly Alorn relies on his henchmen to do his dirty work.**

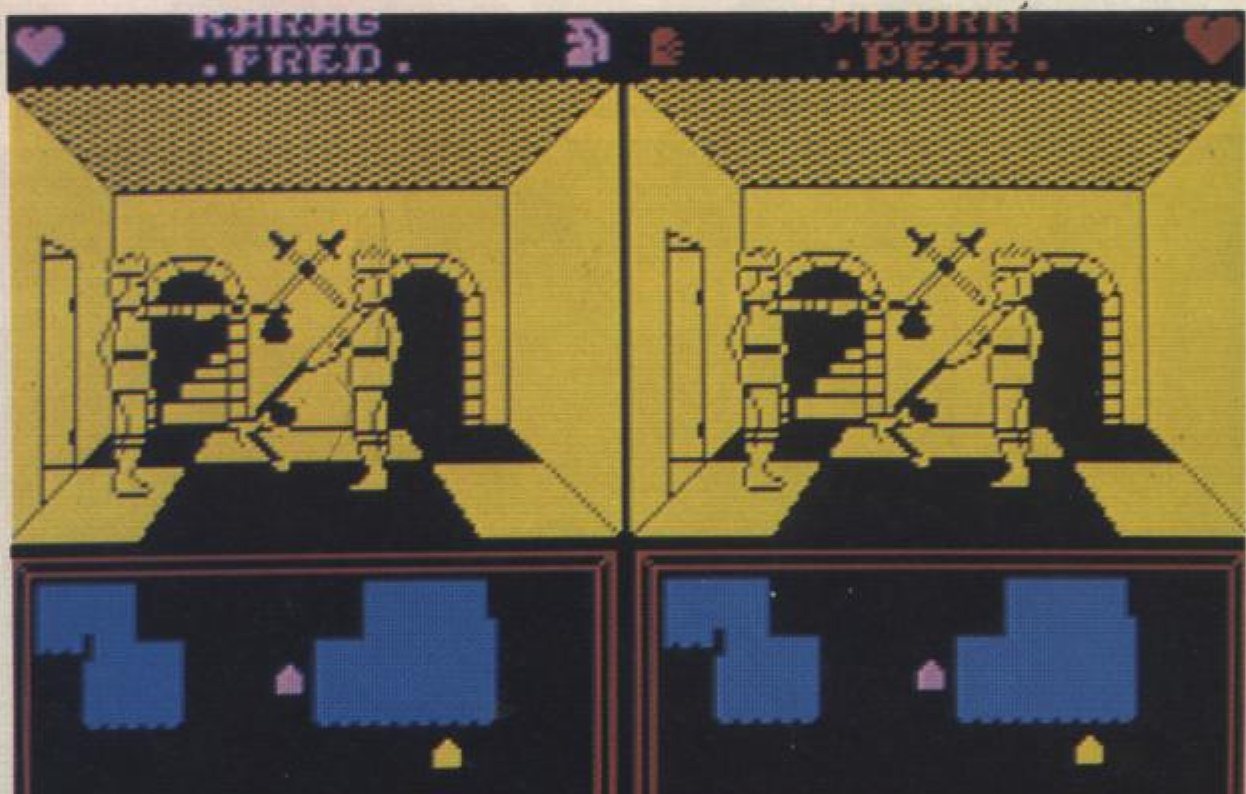


Rooms are shown in perspective (looking front to back), side doors lead left or right and doors at the back of the room indicate stairs leading either up or down.

To begin with, there are nine men-at-arms under the control of each Prince. However, as play progresses, this may increase or decrease as some are killed off and reinforcements are brought in. Men-at-arms come in handy for doing the Prince's dirty work – bumping off the other claimants for the Throne. The selection mode is entered to take control of one of the men-at-arms, allowing a player control of the horizontally scrolling Citadel map at the bottom of the screen. The Citadel is scanned using a cursor, and rooms may be entered as long as they are the same colour as the heart at the top of the screen. The selected room then appears in the room display window.

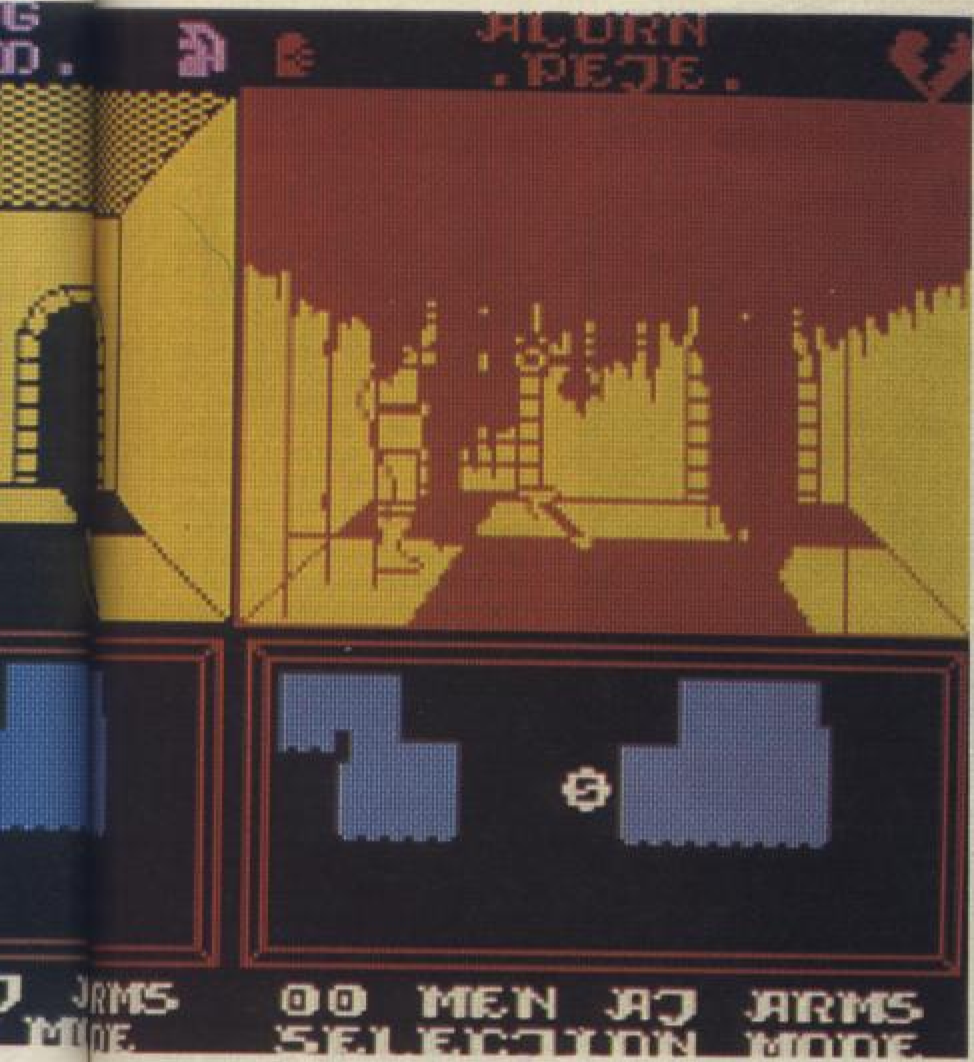
Characters who are in allegiance with a player, but not specifically under control, are unable to move from room to room

► **Karag and Alorn engage in hand to hand combat in the battle to become their father's heir.**



PAUL

" **Mike Singleton** doesn't half come up with some good ideas – and the programmers have done a great job of implementing his designs. The split screen works well, creating plenty of tension in the atmosphere – much like *Spy Vs Spy*. The one player game is a bit weak – being much too easy to be of any challenge. Where Throne of Fire really scores high is when playing against a human opponent, the challenge to beat the other player is immense. If you're a single parent of your Spectrum then think first, as you may end up completing it first time and be left with another unused game. "



▶ Fratricide rules OK! Prince Alorn dies at the hands of his brother Karag.

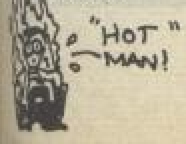
RICKY

*"*Throne Of Fire *is most enjoyable as a two player game, otherwise it becomes too simple . . . and therefore tiresome. The only really annoying feature is the sequence where your character walks up stairs, it's a bit long and pointless. The compact screen works well – everything is on screen at once, so there's no messing about with pulling down awkward menus.* Throne Of Fire *is a very good three-sided battle which has the same degree of atmosphere as other* **Mike Singleton** *games but, having said that, it doesn't appear to have the same compulsion and depth. "*

of their own accord. They are, however, able to defend themselves. Additional weapons are found scattered throughout the Citadel and can be picked up for later use. Strength and energy are measured by a beating heart – it the hearts stops the character pops his chainmail socks. Characters regain their lost strength by resting, or by entering the Throne Room, Gate Rooms or using magic potions.

Reinforcements appear in the Gate Rooms, they enter empty rooms and automatically take side with the last character to be in that room. If no player has been in the room the new arrivals join the ranks of the King's Guard.

The objective is to seize the power of the Citadel; achieved by a player taking his Prince to the Throne Room after disposing of the other two. On gaining the Throne, that Prince becomes King, power is his and the crown is presented.



COMMENTS

Control keys: definable
Joystick: Kempston, Interface 2, Cursor
Use of colour: main play area monochrome, but bright and colourful elsewhere
Graphics: splendid; large, well detailed
Sound: good tune, otherwise not much
Skill levels: three different Princes to play
Screens: 100
General rating: A marvellous game, spoiled by being too easy.

Presentation	84%
Graphics	81%
Playability	75%
Addictive qualities	69%
Value for money	72%
Overall	75%

STAR RAIDERS II

Producer: Electric Dreams
Retail Price: **£9.99**
Author: **Simon Freeman**

The Federation is in trouble and they need you back. Teris is under attack from the dreaded Zylons – led by Chut, the man you defeated so long ago.

Your mission is thus, to defend your home star system of Celos 1V (the glacial planet Arcanum; the desert world of Seridus; Teris itself and it's moon Imbri), obliterate Chut's Master Force, pierce their stronghold in the star system of Procyon, and prevent replenishment of their space fleets by destroying their Attack Bases.

The Liberty Star, the latest in space fighter technology is at your disposal. A scanner shows the view from its cockpit, with a console above indicating the status of the craft and weapons systems.

Available weaponry consists of three computer-aided offensive systems. Fly fighters are destroyed by the Pulse Laser Cannon, with 100 points awarded for each. Prolonged firing of the laser causes overheating and leads to malfunction – the heat level is monitored from the central display. Fly Fighters are followed into the fray by the larger Zylon Destroyers. Here, the Liberty Star's laser automatically changes to the more powerful Ion Cannon, with 500 points earned for each kill. The Command Ships in turn are worth 5,000 points. The third weapon is the Surface Star Burst (SSB); this is a double missile, used to destroy Zylon ground installations.

Defensive shields are also carried, with their status indicated by switching to the Weapons Systems Mode on the Tactical Scanner. Damaged shields are repaired at one of three friendly space stations. Whilst there, the ship's energy levels are replenished, and any used SSB's replaced.

Switching to the star chart gives the position of planets, space stations, Zylon squadrons, the liberty Star, and displays warp trajectories plotted to distant objectives.

When in enemy territory, land bases are picked off with a combination of the Tactical Scanner and SSB's. A status report is given on each planet before and after each attack.

CRITICISM

● **" It wouldn't be much of a compliment if I said that Star Raiders II is just as good as its predecessor – because I didn't like the original very much! This shoot 'em up is reminiscent of the excellent Code Name Mat, but not as much fun to play. The only enjoyment to be had is in blasting anything that moves."**
GARETH

● *" Why ELECTRIC DREAMS ever bought this is a complete mystery to me, it's one of the most boring games that I've ever seen. I can see how all the blasting appealed in the days of other ATARI classics such as Space Invaders and Planetoids, but nowadays people want a bit more than pointless pixel-pulping. The planet graphics are flickery and little imagination has been used in the deep space section – the explosions are nice, but that's about it."*
PAUL

COMMENTS

Control Keys: Cursor
Joystick: Kempston, Cursor, Interface 2
Use of colour: varied and bright
Graphics: effective explosions and smooth scrolling
Sound: irritating white noise
Skill levels: one
Screens: eight: seven planets and the star chart
General rating: A dated arcade conversion of the 'left, right and fire' variety.

Presentation	69%
Graphics	65%
Playability	57%
Addictive qualities	46%
Value for money	44%
Overall	52%

▶ In search of Teris – the wicked Zylons are at it again.



NEMESIS THE WARLOCK

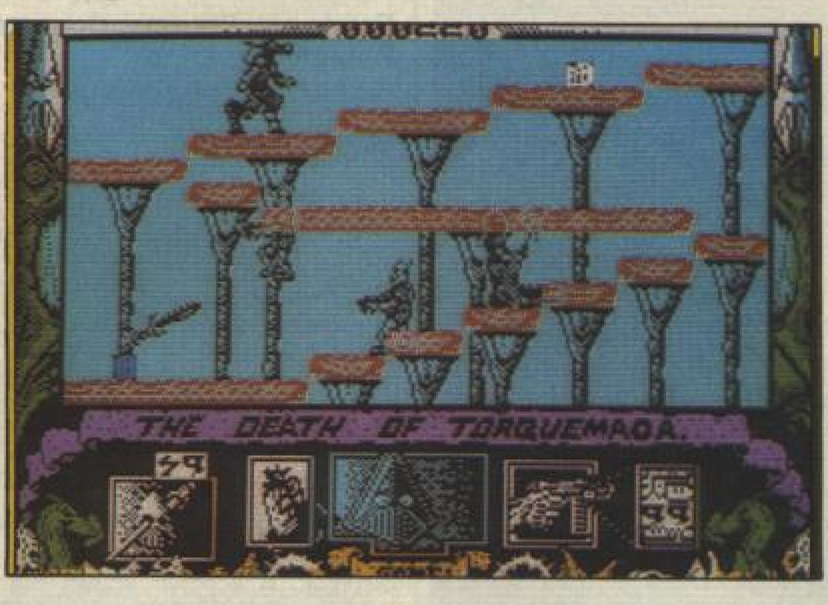
Producer: Martech
Retail Price: **£7.95**
Author: **Creative Reality**

The very latest in licensing deals finds MARTECH transforming *2000 AD*'s Nemesis the Warlock from pen and ink into pixilated state. As ever the struggle between good and evil forms the plot, with Nemesis as Clint Eastwood, Thomas de Torquemada as Lee Van Cleef and Torquemada's castle as the wild west.

Defeating evil is the name of the game, and taking the part of Nemesis, the idea's to top the man at the top by infiltrating his bastille. Not an easy trick that, as Torquemada's whacky fanatics are on the loose. Being a sensitive, socially aware type of superhero, the warlock finds that the only way to get to the heart of the problem is to hack a fair few minions to bits.

MIKE

"Fans of the *2000 AD* comic strip may be a little disappointed by this release from MARTECH, as all it really amounts to is a simple shoot 'em up scenario, worked around the cult characters. Even when viewed as such, it's only an average hacking game, the action being ultimately repetitive. The attribute clash as figures walk along the platforms is really annoying, and leaves the screen looking messy and unfinished. Unfortunately, there is little real connection between the game and the comic strip: gone are Grobbendonk, Ro-Jaws and the ABC Warriors, and possibly any lasting interest with them."



Not that Nemesis needs to hack them apart with his bare hooves; equipped with a swinging sword, venemous acid spit (look out Jan Leeming) and a death dealing firearm, our hero can blow 'em away with the best of them.

On screen this is how the action happens: left and right controls Nemesis in those directions while Up and Down means jump and duck. Platforms are the backing for the big man's heroic exploits, with his movements limited by the screen's boundaries. Only when an alloted number of denizens are destroyed is the passageway to the next level opened – however, this doorway is not obvious and must be searched for. As the bodies pile up it's possible, and sometimes necessary, to use the corpses as stepping stones to new heights.

If you're lucky enough to have bullets in your gun, pressing the fire button sends them in the general direction of your enemy – otherwise it activates a swiping sword. Extra ammunition can be picked up about the landscape, but quantities are finite so it's nifty to be thrifty. A display at the bottom of the screen keeps you informed by delivering a host of useful information. This includes the amount of ammo remaining, the required number of terminated terminators and a particularly gruesome depiction of a hand squeezing a heart. This bloody graphic relates to Nemesis' strength, each time he comes into contact with a terminator the hand squeezes a little tighter – eventually wringing out all of the warlock's life blood, and thereby ending the game.

Also worth attention is the ever-changing icon of Torquemada, which dictates his spiritual presence. This effects his minion's fanaticism so that even after disembowelment Torquemada's goons are often prone to transformation into axe wielding Zombies when their master is near.

As the levels progress new hazards threaten our hero. Flying swords appear and bottomless pits open, waiting for a careless step. Torquemada's terminators are fanatical in their quest to purify the universe – so be pure, be vigilant . . . but most of all BEHAVE!

GARETH

"Dear me! Nemesis the Warlock *must be one of the most pitiful platform games I've ever seen. The graphics are so horrific that when Nemesis is walking, his head disappears into the bottom of another platform. The mighty sword Excessus looks more like a bamboo cane, and flickers on and off when fighting. The computer-nasty graphics are certainly not for the weak stomached, and I found them to be in very bad taste!*"

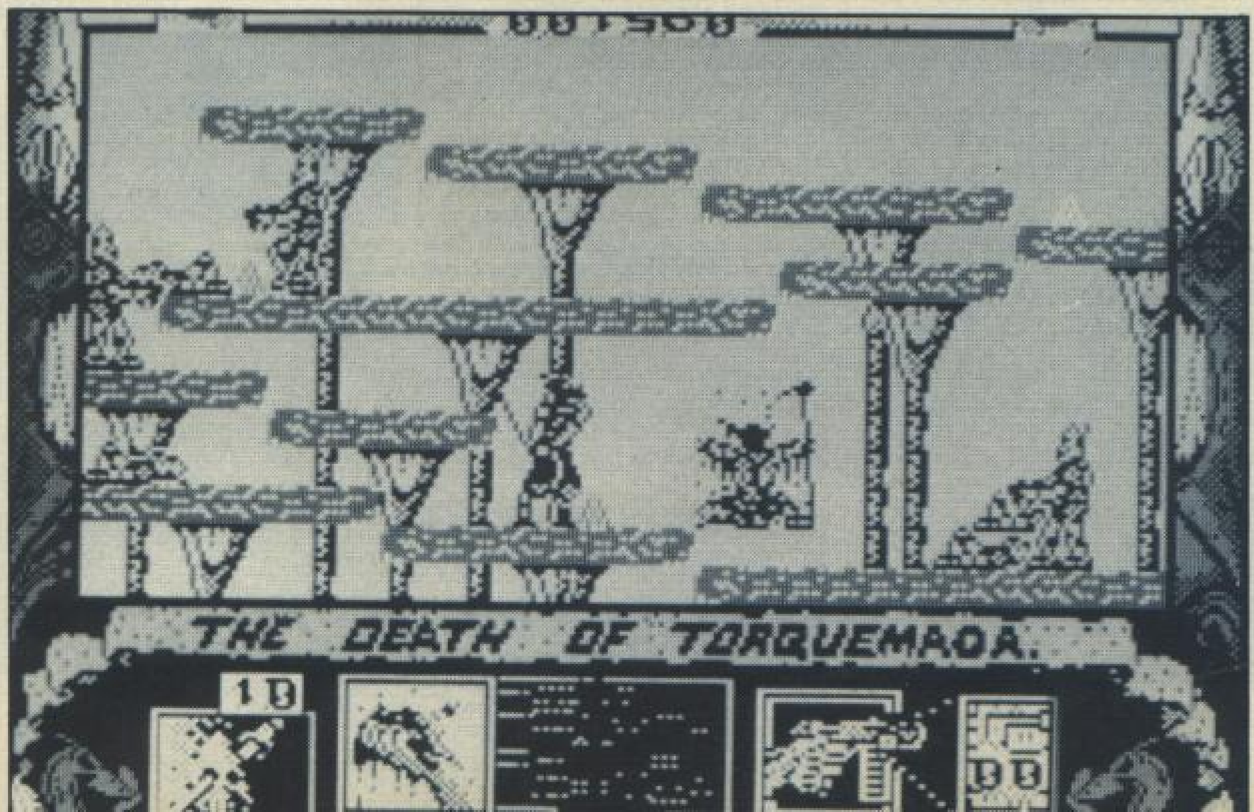
BEN

"**Although a lot better than** MELBOURNE'S Judge Dredd, Nemesis the Warlock **is still not as good as it could (or should) have been. The bloodthirsty comic-strip style is adequately recreated, but the graphics still leave a lot to be desired. Fighting off the Terminators offers no real challenge as they don't do much damage – if you obliterate enough of them fast enough there shouldn't be any real hassle, until the later levels where deadly swords and bottomless pits make an appearance.** Nemesis the Warlock **is a slightly above average platform hack 'em up, with the added attraction of a big-name licence.**"

COMMENTS

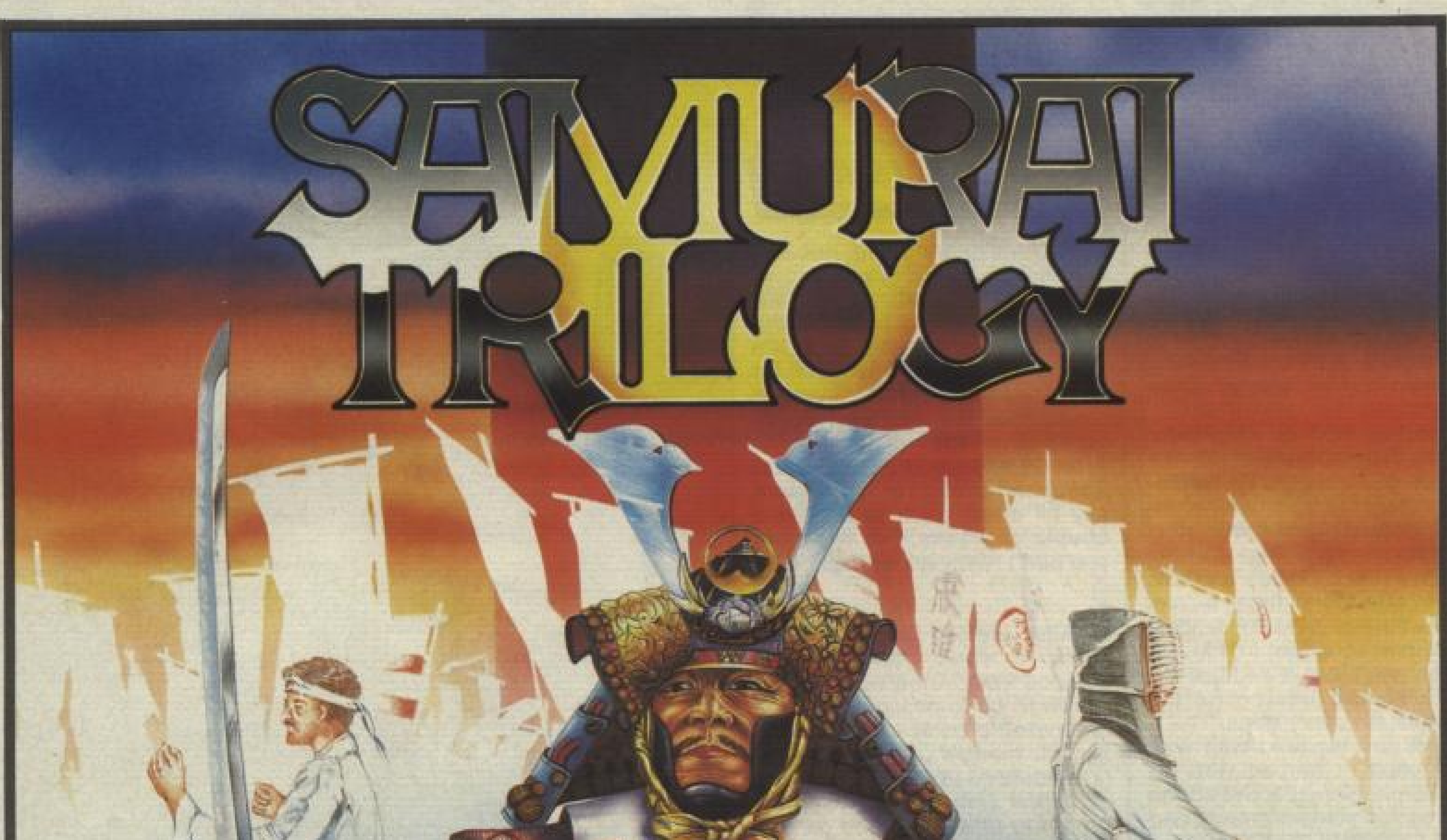
Control keys: definable, left/right, duck/jump, fire and spit fiery acid needed
Joystick: Kempston, Interface 2
Use of colour: basic colour scheme with appalling clashes
Graphics: indistinct as sprites merge with background
Sound: below average, but an excellent Rob Hubbard 128 tune
Skill levels: one
Screens: thirty
General rating: Somewhat disappointing licence with just enough game to be above average.

Presentation	64%
Graphics	60%
Playability	61%
Addictive qualities	56%
Value for money	52%
Overall	61%





Only the honourable will Survive the bloody conflict of



SUPERB 24" x 16" FINE ART PRINT OFFER SEE PACK FOR DETAILS.

In an age in which honour was revered, from a time when grace and beauty were virtues, a class of warriors set themselves apart to dedicate their lives to a perfection in combat that in itself was an artform, to a discipline of mind that became a religion. The attaining of such excellence required an extraordinary diligence in selfdenial and training in order to achieve the ultimate accolade 'War Lord'. Kendo, Karate and finally Samurai are the tests that must be mastered before such honour can be bestowed.







Gremlin Graphics Software Ltd.,
Alpha House, 10 Carver Street, Sheffield
Tel: 0742 753423

Amstrad £9.99 tape, £14.99 disk
CBM64/128 £9.99 tape, £14.99 disk
Spectrum £7.99 tape

Reviews

COLONY

Producer: Bulldog Soft
Retail Price: **£1.99**
Author: **Icon Design**

Man versus pest – the eternal battle for survival – threatens a far-off colony. It's a continual struggle to keep food supplies from being consumed by voracious creatures.

A fence is built to keep them from the human compound, but still they get through. A maintenance droid patrols the compound, consisting of seven storage and control buildings. Moving between all the buildings, and able to carry up to four items at a time, the droid's job is to fix fences, destroy pests that get in, harvest the crop and store it, and use the planet's homing beacon for the safe arrival of supply ships.

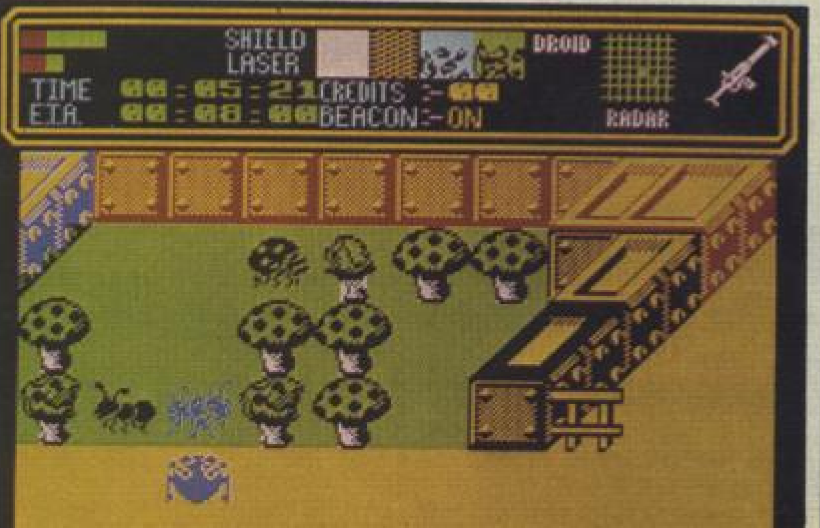
Fences are repaired with wire mesh, wood or barbed wire, all taken from their respective stores via an option screen, and carried to the damaged site. Anything removed from a store must be paid for.

Portable death traps can be used to block off galloping gourmet paths, but the creatures can be predatory, even lethal if the droid's shield energy is too low. It's equipped with a laser of limited charge, although time must be taken to recharge shield and laser levels in the droid charger room.

Most operations use power, and if too much is consumed things switch off, use too little and the generator overloads. The compound's supply is expanded by increasing the number of solar panels, available from the general store.

Credits are awarded for harvesting crops, but to generate a future yield, seeds must be taken from the stores and planted on the compound's grassy sections.

When the colony's supplies run low, more are ordered from Earth. The droid activates a homing beacon as the ship approaches, but the longer it's switched on, the more power is used. Even then, the job isn't over. The supplies must be unpacked from crates in the appropriate buildings – and all the while, the hungry horrors are breaking in through the fence.



CRITICISM

●" Colony **is annoying, not just a little bit infuriating you understand, it's an inducer of full-blown 'screaming blue tearing out hair syndrome', and it's great – for a bit. Appeal will be short lived once you've memorised the map and discovered the various problems. After an afternoon's play I'd just about had enough of it, but I dare say I'll come back to it after a couple of weeks. For two quid you can't really go wrong. "**

BEN

●"*After starting with the great* Feud, *I would have thought* BULLDOG *would know what a game needs to be appealing! Here the graphics are badly drawn, showing little thought of where the colour should be used, and character detection is mediocre.* Colony *is no fun to play at all. The game's idea is boring and repetetive, so its attraction wears off fast. "*

PAUL

●" There is an element of playability here, but unfortunately the poor implementation means it has to struggle to make itself known. Resultingly, *Colony* isn't much of a fun game. "

MIKE

COMMENTS

Control keys: definable
Joystick: Kempston, Interface 2, Cursor
Use of colour: basic and oddly defined
Graphics: simple forced perspective and averge definition
Sound: average
Skill levels: one
General rating: Could have been an addictive idea, but poor implementation spoils.

Presentation	59%
Graphics	48%
Playability	46%
Addictive qualities	42%
Value for money	54%
Overall	**45%**





Feast your eyes on the detailed graphics as Arachnus scuttles across a landscape of fear.



The 25 sectors of Amaurote – a city forgotten, but infested.







A·M·A·U·R·O·T·E

A CRASH Smash

Forgotten Amaurote is a metropolis invaded by a lethal swarm of insects. The city's 25 sectors are under the mandible, with an insect colony, ruled by its own Queen, established in each. The Queen's job is simply to produce an army of scouts and drones. While she remains immobile, the scouts fly about and the drones (the most common – and expendable) patrol the ground.

A sector is selected from the title screen, after which the action begins (except on the 128 or + 2, when an animated sequence illustrates the hero entering Arachnus 4, the spider-like combat craft under your control).

The objective is to rid the sector of every insect, before progressing onto the next, and repeating the same procedure. Sectors are illustrated in forced 3D perspective, not scrolling, but with a flip-screen technique where the flip happens just before reaching the screen's edge.

Scouts and drones are exterminated by shooting, but as each one dies the Queen wastes no time in producing another to keep her army up to strength. Your arsenal also contains bombs, although these can't be fired until the previous one has detonated.



CRITICISM

Loading Amaurote **on the 128K reveals a host of enhancements. For a start there's a standard David Whittaker title track, which blares out whilst the usual 48K attract mode goes through its scrolly paces. Once a sector has been selected from the map, a beautifully animated sequence of the Arachnus being manned and lowered to the planet's surface is accompanied by another Whittaker piece. Gameplay is made infinitely more atmospheric by an exploding queen sequence, and the weird soundtrack As the 128 version is a significant improvement over the 48K, I've supplied separate ratings:**

Presentation	**98%**
Graphics	**94%**
Playability	**93%**
Addictive Qualities	**91%**
Value for Money	**96%**
Overall	**94%**

Producer: MAD
Retail Price: **£2.99**
Author: **Binary Design**

On Amaurote, the local currency is 'Dosh', and a Supabomb powerful enough to kill a Queen costs 5000 Bits of Dosh. This is requested over the 'Radio Menu', where additional options such as more Bombs, Rescue and a Repair Service are also available. Once requested, the Supabomb is dropped somewhere within the sector and must be located. The compass used for this task is also useful in discovering the whereabouts of a Queen or the scouts and drones.

CRITICISM

" Amaurote**'s concept is an old and simple one – seek, locate and destroy. However, with** BINARY DESIGN**'s now familiar style of presentation** Amaurote **is remarkably slick. The effects are pleasant to watch; the way the letters fade from the screen is superb, and the freaky use of colour linking front end and the game has to be seen to be believed. The graphics, although monochrome, appear solid and are suitably futuristic, making exploration of the 2,500 locations really enjoyable. You can change the preset colour too, so there shouldn't be much difficulty in finding one that suits you. There's plenty of action and thought involved in** Amaurote **to keep your attention for a good few weeks. "**

RICKY

CRITICISM

" Well! What can I say, this game is just brilliant. I always like original games, and I've never seen anything like this before. There are so many different features to Amaurote **that they would take too long to explain. The graphics are superb and the animation is unbelievably smooth – the only real disappointment is a lack of colour, but it's not needed anyway. I almost fell off my chair when I heard that this is a budget game – how can such a well-designed game be so cheap? It's a must for any Spectrum owner's collection. "**

GARETH

CRITICISM

" Now this is more like it. I haven't seen a game as original as this for ages. Graphically, Amaurote **is superb, although lacking in colour variation. It's also great fun to play. The scenery is densely detailed with all the objects decently sized, although I could have done with more landscape and less of the massive border around the screen's edge.** Amaurote **is full of little features – the 'Radio' being the best of them – and it has lots of content. But I did find the playing keys strangely situated and very hard to get used to. That said, you'd be foolish to miss this tremendous game at such a cheap price. "**

PAUL

When the Queen and her hive of insect subjects has been destroyed, the Arachnus progresses onto another sector, and then another, until all 25 have been cleared. If the City Damage and Personal Damage meters reach 99 percent, you have failed, and you're not even worthy to swat a few pesky flies, let alone deal with the horror of *Amaurote*.

COMMENTS

Control keys: Y-P up/right, Q-T up/left, H-ENTER down/right, A-G down/left, B-SPACE to fire, CAPS SHIFT for Radio
Joystick: none
Use of colour: monochrome, but background colour change option
Graphics: superb, original, well-designed and animated
Sound: uninspiring on 48K, quite extraordinary on 128
Skill levels: one
Screens: 100 in each of 25 sectors
General rating: An amazing achievement in budget software, highly playable and addictive.

Presentation	93%
Graphics	93%
Playability	92%
Addictive qualities	91%
Value for money	94%
Overall	92%

RASTERSCAN

Producer: Mastertronic
Retail Price: **£1.99**
Author: **John Pickford**

Rasterscan, a large damaged spaceship, drifts uncontrollably towards a tugging star. The craft can be repaired and flown away from its prospective death plunge, but the only means of doing this is using a globular maintenance droid called MSB. But the rounded 'bot has a busted brain, its one remaining sound program is how to repair a pop up toaster, and it has no knowledge of how to operate a space ship.

You have control of this limbless droid, and can move it to the left or right, up and down, through a labyrinth of coloured power cables and piping. A display at the bottom left of the screen shows MSB's position within the ship.

Once repaired the droid can plug into, and operate the ship's machinery and instruments. Every piece of equipment has a function, and once repaired it can be connected to the ship's power supply and this purpose defined.

MSB's passage through the ship is not unobstructed. Locked doors block certain sections of the ship. By manoeuvring MSB into the jaws of upturned spanner heads logic puzzles are revealed, differing from lock to lock. Once solved, the door is opened and MSB is free to bounce on its way.

The bridge contains a scanner, showing the ship's position as a flashing point, the star to which it is being drawn and several planets. The scanner is triggered by flicking on, in the right order, a series of three switches contained in a locked room close to the bridge.

MSB pilots the craft from a control room near the scanner. Here four indicators show the speed of each engine, and a central circular display gives the Rasterscan's direction and relative speed.

PAUL

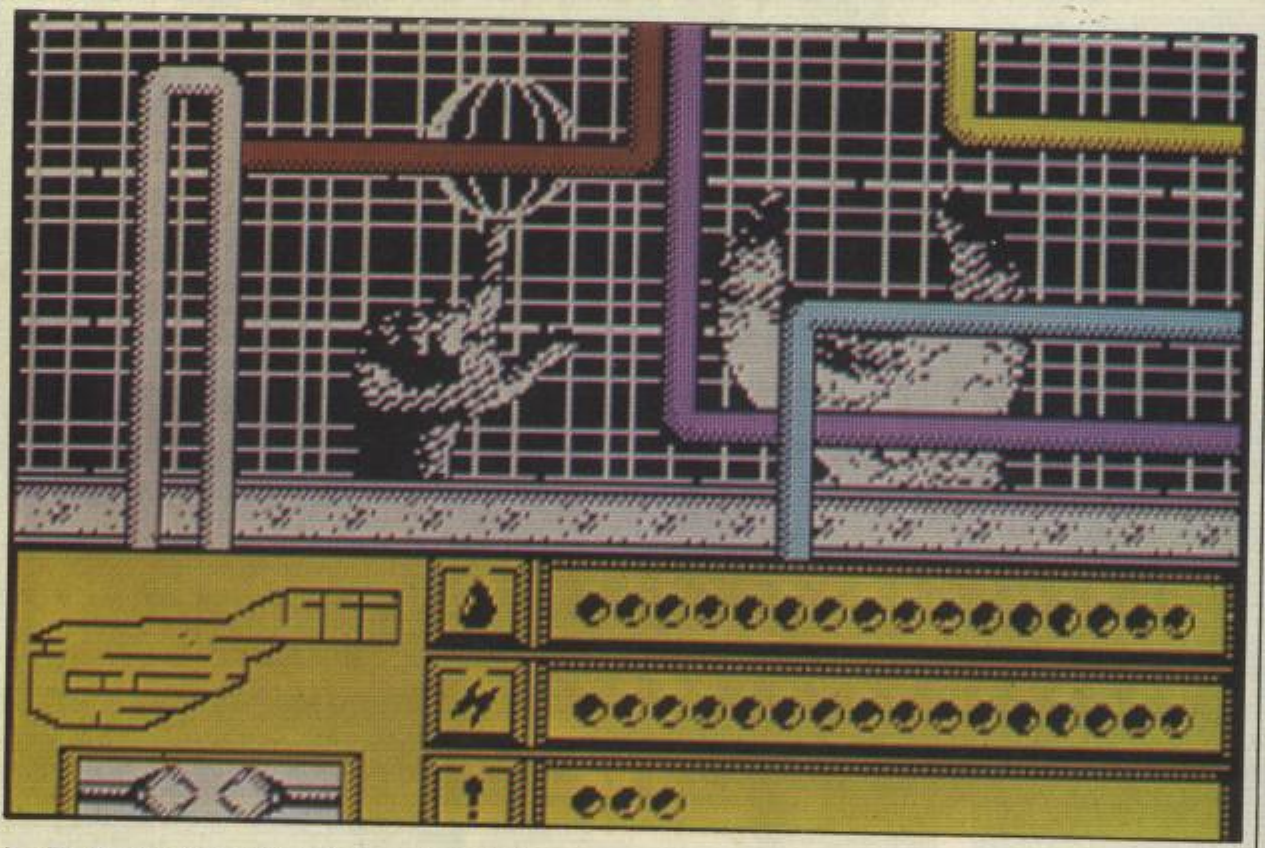
" I found Rasterscan very annoying. The graphics are absolutely brilliant (digitised I presume), and they remembered to put a decent splattering of colour in as well. Just the right amount of momentum is given making the gameplay feel right. I'm disappointed that the sound is limited to a single tune on the title screen, as effects during the game would have made is much more atmospheric. The locks on each of the doors are all very easy, until you come to the useful ones which are practically impossible to solve. There's lots there, and it represents good value at £1.99 "

MIKE

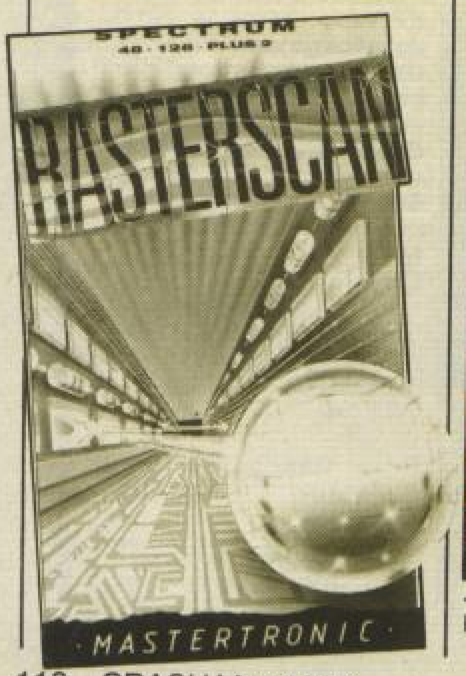
" The first thing that hits you about *Rasterscan* is the excellent graphics. The ball moves smoothly, and some of the scenery, like the cassette recorder, and the hand which you start upon, is really nice. I enjoyed it, except for the occasional crash. It's not bad, but it's worth a look, even if only because it's one of the better cheapies. "

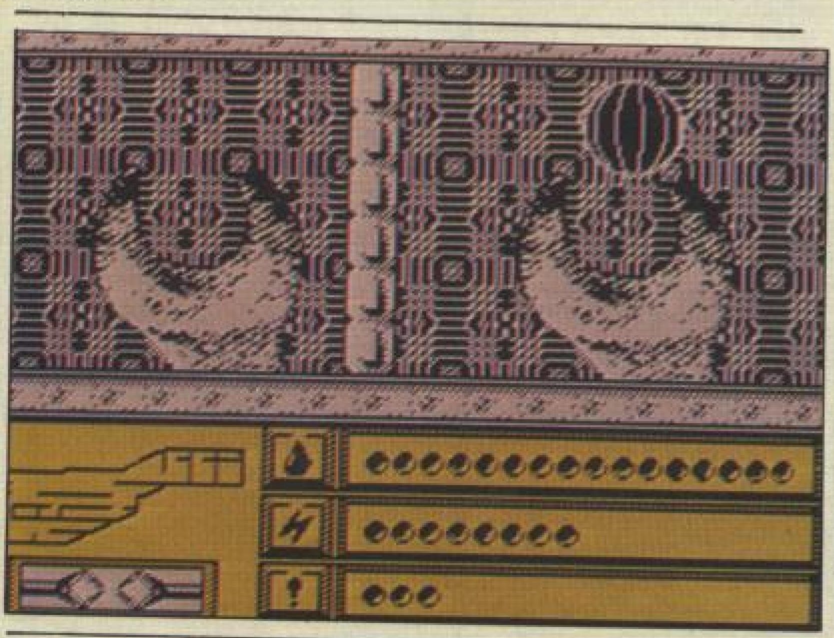
GARETH

" At first I found Rasterscan very frustrating, I didn't have a clue as to what I was meant to be doing, even reading the inlay didn't help. After delving into this for a long time I finally found the secret and consequently enjoyed myself a lot. The ball moves around the screen very smoothly and has a neat trick of bouncing off walls, making the atmosphere realistic. It's a great pity that there's no sound, but you can't expect everything from a budget game. Well worth a look at. "



The limbless droid called MSB (the segmented globe seen behind the red line) can be moved around the crippled vessel, its position seen in the scanner bottom-left.





By manoeuvring MSB into the jaws of the spanner-shaped objects, puzzles are revealed, which, when solved, open doors to locked parts of the ship.

COMMENTS

Control keys: Q up, A down, O left, P right, SYMBOL SHIFT fire
Joystick: Kempston, Cursor, Interface 2
Use of colour: subtle but effective pastel shades
Graphics: unusually hazy backgrounds and smooth animation
Sound: limited
Skill levels: one
Screens: one large playing area
General rating: An unusual concept which has been done justice in its execution.

Presentation	78%
Graphics	87%
Playability	72%
Addictive qualities	70%
Value for money	76%
Overall	75%

KINETIK

Producer: Firebird
Retail Price: **£7.95**

As you attempt to circumnavigate a planet, your space ship comes under the influence of a strange set of changeable physical laws. Your craft moves left, right, up and down, but control is imprecise and variable. With this limitation, you fly through a corridor of flora, surface outcrops and planetary inhabitants.

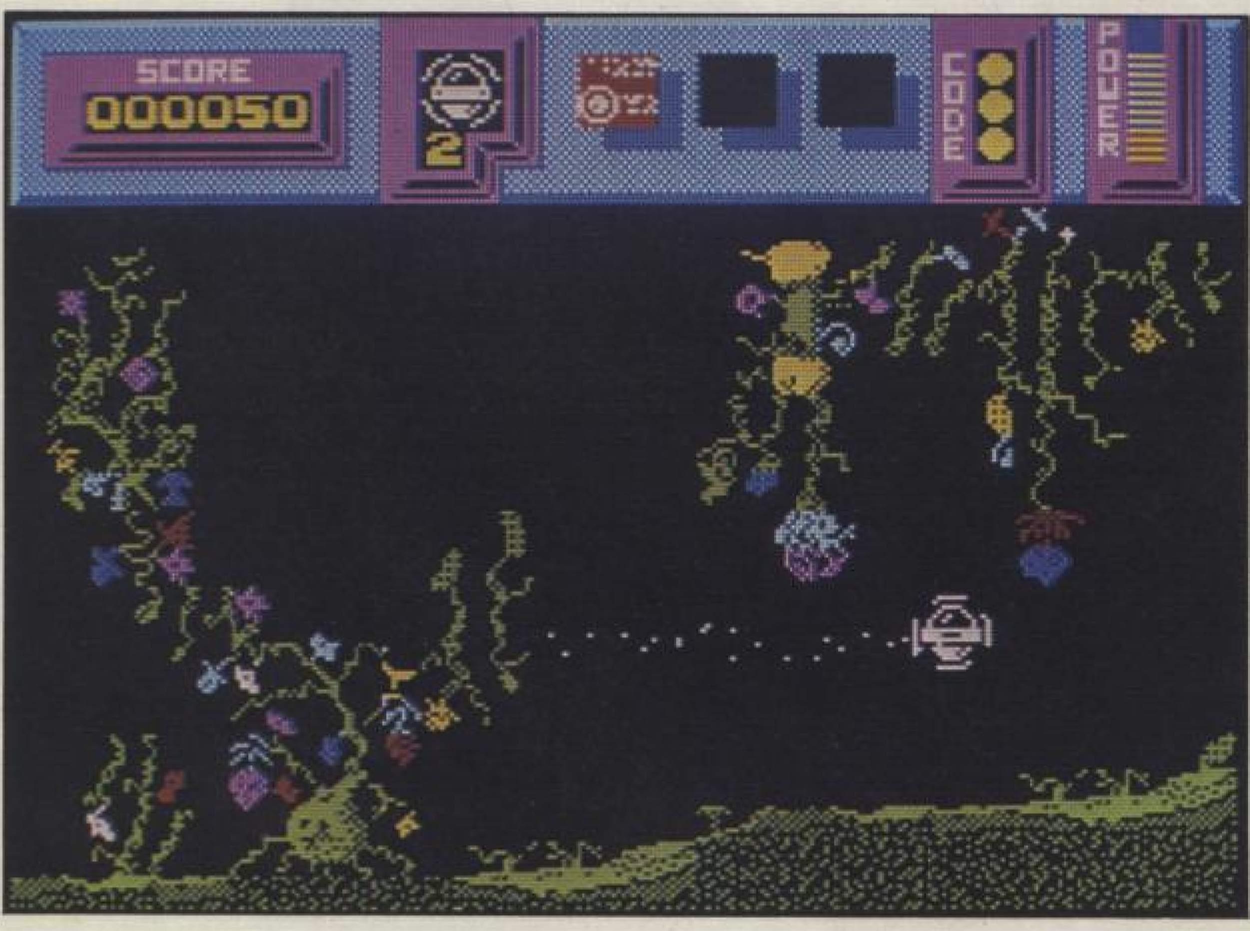
The characters P,A and X lie on the planet's surface and are collected when flown over. A Latin word is then formed, completing your mission when presented to the hand of the Kinemator in the final screen. Should the word be spelled incorrectly the game continues, if the letters are not collected your mission is doomed. Thirty-three points are awarded for every one of the 44 screens moved to on the right, and 33 lost for every screen entered to the left.

Power is limited and continually diminishing, with energy drain increasing when walls or planetary inhabitants are touched. One of three ships is lost when power falls to zero, but another is gained on reaching 1,000 points. Flying through water replenishes power, whilst full power and 500 points are generated by picking up a bonus symbol.

MIKE

" I wasn't very pleased with Kinetik. It didn't really appeal to me at first, and I didn't find much fun in it later either. The graphics are colourful, but too small and undetailed for my liking. Rather than finding that the movement effect added to the playability, I found them annoying on some of the screens. Having said that, I think that a lot of people will find it worthwhile, especially as it's one of FIREBIRD's cheaper games. "





► Struggling against the effects of gravity is only one of the problems encountered in the brilliantly coloured screens of Kinetik.

PAUL

" The standard of production at FIREBIRD has increased considerably over the first few months of this year. It takes quite a while to get used to the weird control and the massive amount of magnetism on some screens – but it's certainly worth the persistence. There are some great little baddies – every one of them quickly and smoothly animated, although they did seem to reappear quite often. The full price was a bit of a shock, but then again so was the game! "

Navigational and defence systems are available as follows – Safety Shields protect the ship from lethal objects and energy-sapping inhabitants; a Powder Sprayer frightens the aliens and destroys walls, an Anti-Gravity mechanism counteracts gravity; whilst the Anti-Physics device nullifies gravity, bounce, friction, gravitational and repulsive objects and saves some energy; a once-off teleporter moves between screens – but not all screens can be teleported to.

Instruments are acquired and stored in an activated instrument box, with a maximum of three instruments carried simultaneously. Collecting an instrument in an already utilised box loses the previously acquired device. The Safety Shield offers no protection from an occasionally appearing cube, any contact with this causes the loss of one collected device.

GARETH

" Kinetik seemed boring and unexciting at first, but after a while it began to grow on me. The gravitational effect is absolutely brilliant, just crossing a screen is a fight between player and computer! The graphics are very smooth and well animated, with the only problem being that the same nasties appear on most of the screens. FIREBIRD have really made a good job of this game, but maybe it is a little overpriced? "

COMMENTS

Control keys: a up, z down, 9 left, 0 right, Q-P select instrument box, X - SYMBOL SHIFT action,
Joystick: Kempston, Cursor, Interface 2
Use of colour: extraordinarily bright, and many used
Graphics: smallish, but detailed, though nasties lack in variety
Sound: above average
Skill levels: one
General rating: An unusual and playable game despite the powerful gravity!

Presentation	75%
Graphics	77%
Playability	69%
Addictive qualities	71%
Value for money	63%
Overall	71%

BIG TROUBLE
IN LITTLE CHINA

Producer: Electric Dreams
Retail Price: **£9.99**

Green eyed girls are in big demand, for only by marrying and sacrificing one can the villainous, Mandarin Lo Pan secure a mortal body. The girlfriends of Jack Burton and Wang Chi are captured for this very purpose, and taken down into the underground world lying beneath San Francisco's Chinatown.

In order to rescue Gracie Law and Miao Yin, our heroes, accompanied by their friend Egg Shen, must fight a way through Chinatown and into the Mandarin's sewer world.

Jack Burton at first defends himself only with his fists, though if he can get far enough into the Mandarin's lair he can pick up and use a Bushmaster gun and ammunition.

Wang Chi is a martial arts expert who is able to pick up and use any sword he finds. Blades become fragile and eventually break, but replacements are found en route.

Unlike his two walking companions, Egg Shen floats along on a cushion of mystical vapour. Magical powers are his forté though initially the magic bolts he fires have limited range and strength. On finding a potion bottle he can shoot devastating lightning bolts over greater distances. Shen's zapping ability has a limited life, but picking up fresh potion supplies revives his strong magic.

Controlling all three characters, you can switch between them at any time – by typing the initial letter of the characters name you want to take the lead. He is then leapfrogged to the front with the other two following. Each prospective hero is able to move forwards or backwards, jump, duck and attack at different heights, (from low to high). Weapons are picked up by walking the appropriate character over them.

As they progress the status of each hero is given, Burton to the left, Chi in the centre and Shen to the right. In each character's window, together with their portraits are three entwined yin and yang signs – the male and female Chinese symbols of destiny. These indicate stamina levels and are reduced by exertion and contact with the Mandarin's guardians and his magic – food replenishes these reserves. A character dies when his entire stock of Yin and Yang signs vanishes. Collecting a potion bottle adds strength to all three heroes.

The scenario unfolds over four levels. On the streets of Chinatown the Mandarin's hoodlums are encountered. Highly skilled in the martial arts or carrying guns and swords, some of these evasive, somersaulting thugs do not allow our rescuers to pass without a fight.

Street warriors also patrol the sewers of the next level, but now they are accompanied by energy sapping sewer monsters that cannot be killed, only evaded.

Lo Pan's Headquarters make up the third level, populated by hat wearing elemental beings called Storms. At every level when gangsters or thugs are killed they evaporate into a smoke-puff. Points are credited at the base of the screen, on the death of each. Weapon-wielding thugs and Storms give more points when destroyed. Defeat these and the other henchmen and Lo Pan himself can be faced in combat.

The Marriage Chamber at the headquarters heart is the last level. Here Armoured warriors appear, accompanied by Lo Pan who floats on a flying cloud. The united skills of all three heroes are required to defeat the Mandarin, for Lo Pan must be shot, pierced and zapped before he is eventually killed. On his death Miao Yin and Gracie Law can embrace their men once more.

PAUL

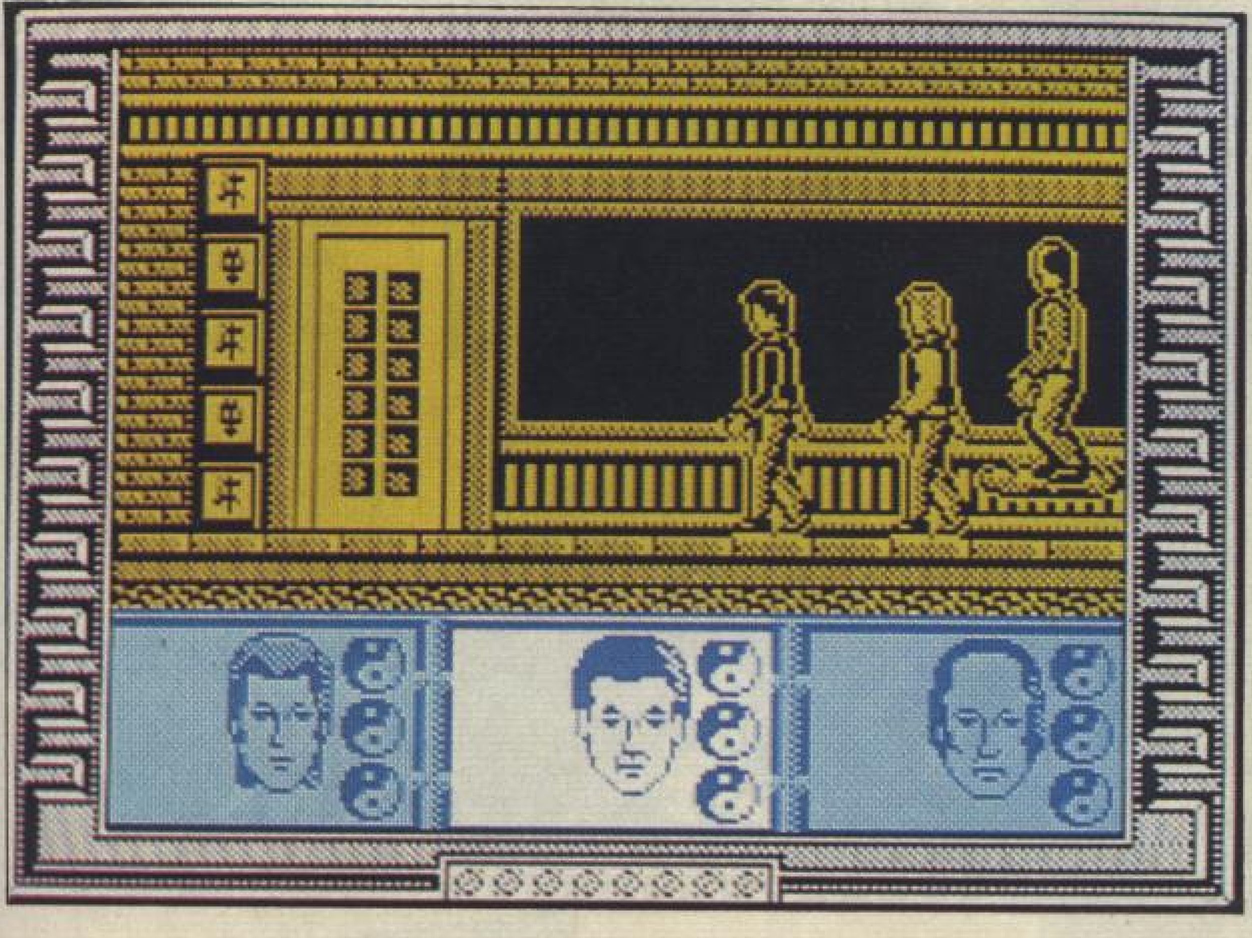
" What a disappointment Big Trouble *is . . . The music's excellent and very appropriate for the game. The effects are crunching, even if they aren't very varied. The graphics are very detailed and well drawn – the backgrounds scrolling smoothly. But that's about it! The game contains little else. I got very quickly bored with just blowing up every tough character that stepped in my way. Superb presentation, but no game. If you pay ten pounds for this you'll be disappointed. "*

GARETH

" I'm sure that all the martial arts gamesters will love this one. Big Trouble **is a good likeness to the film, running around pulverising the enemy – making a change from the usual sub-standard conversions. The graphics are not the usual run–off–mill either, but the backgrounds have an inclination to repeat on all levels. The characters' animation is also very effective, with a different forms of movement lending a distinct personality to each. The tune lends an oriental atmosphere, helping add even more to the overall effect. I enjoyed playing** Big Trouble **– but it would be better if it were slightly cheaper! "**

MIKE

" This isn't a particularly amazing game; the graphics are only adequate, but the playability is there and there's a few hours enjoyable scrapping to be had. I haven't seen the film (and if friends' comments are anything to go on, then I'm one of the lucky ones!) so I can't draw any comparisons, but the game is reasonable; the only problem being its high price. I doubt its lastability – maybe a few days, maybe a bit more – but certainly not ten quid's worth. Have a look, if only because there haven't been that many good beat 'em ups lately. "



COMMENTS

Control keys: I/O left/right, Y/H up/down, P to fire
Joystick: Kempston, Interface 2
Use of colour: very good
Graphics: smooth moving, animated foreground sprites with detailed but unvarying backgounds
Sound: good play tune and suitably hefty spot FX
Skill levels: one
Screens: four levels
General rating: A well implemented licence with plenty going for it, but its a high price to pay for slick presentation.

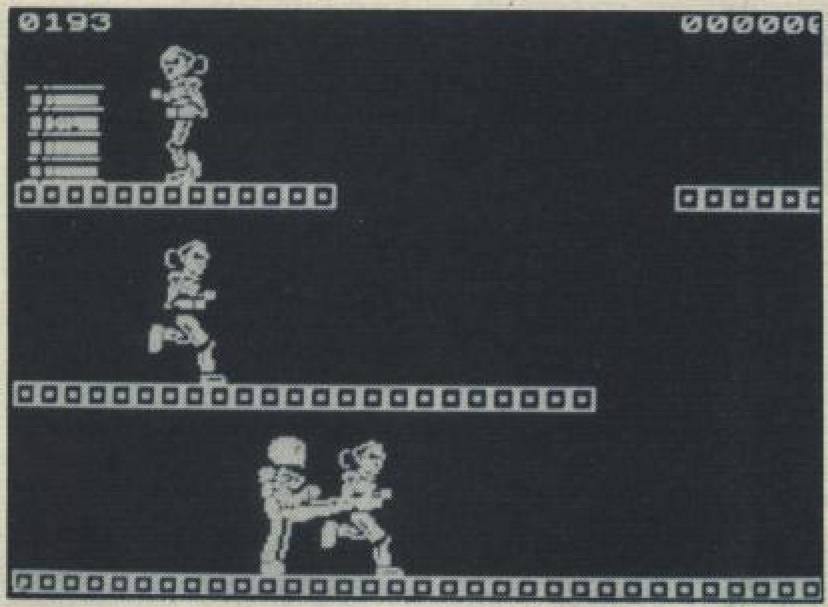
Presentation	81%
Graphics	74%
Playability	69%
Addictive qualities	67%
Value for money	60%
Overall	67%

KNUCKLEBUSTERS

Producer: Melbourne House
Retail Price: **£7.95**
Author: **Steve Taylor and Paul Gomm**

By the early 21st century one in three adults are in prison. To reduce these numbers, long sentences have been replaced by rehabilitation surgery which removes a criminal's anti-social tendencies. Rehabilitated criminals (the Re-Formed or Androids), cannot think independently and take up menial positions in police no-go areas and Penal Re-Form centres.

Faced with the prospect of a reforming lobotomy, Deke has escaped from his holding prison. In so doing he damages the city's central computer, thus ensuring the inevitable destruction of the city itself.



If Deke reaches city limits he is safe, but to do that he must pass through six hostile zones – the cell blocks, guard area and prison wall, the city, down town precinct, outer city wall, and via a single exit the city wall itself. With the city heading for self destruction, Deke's escape time is limited. A running on screen countdown shows the time he has left.

Five types of android lie in wait on Deke's escape route, each can be avoided or fought. Evading opposing androids allows Deke to explore further. To do that he can run to the left or right, jump upwards or drop down to other levels and pass through doors in his multi-level platform world.

Some androids cannot be avoided, they do not let Deke pass easily and require a sustained battering with kicks and punches before they die. Others can be disposed of merely by running into them. Points are awarded for killing the lobotomised individuals, with an accumulating points total shown on screen.

Combat with androids reduces our escapee's energy levels, displayed on the right of the screen. Should these fall to zero Deke loses one of his three lives. His energy reserve is topped up by uncovering hidden supplies of food and drink. These together with keys for passing through locked doors, extra points and lives are concealed beneath boxes and oil cans and behind doors. By kicking or punching away obscuring objects these items are revealed, automatically picked up and displayed in the box at the top right of the screen.

However, some of these hiding places conceal ambushing androids, nothing at all or are booby trapped, (when they are, a life is lost and a deaths-head appears in the acquisition box). Deke is not able to uncover any object or escape through a door whilst being attacked.

PAUL

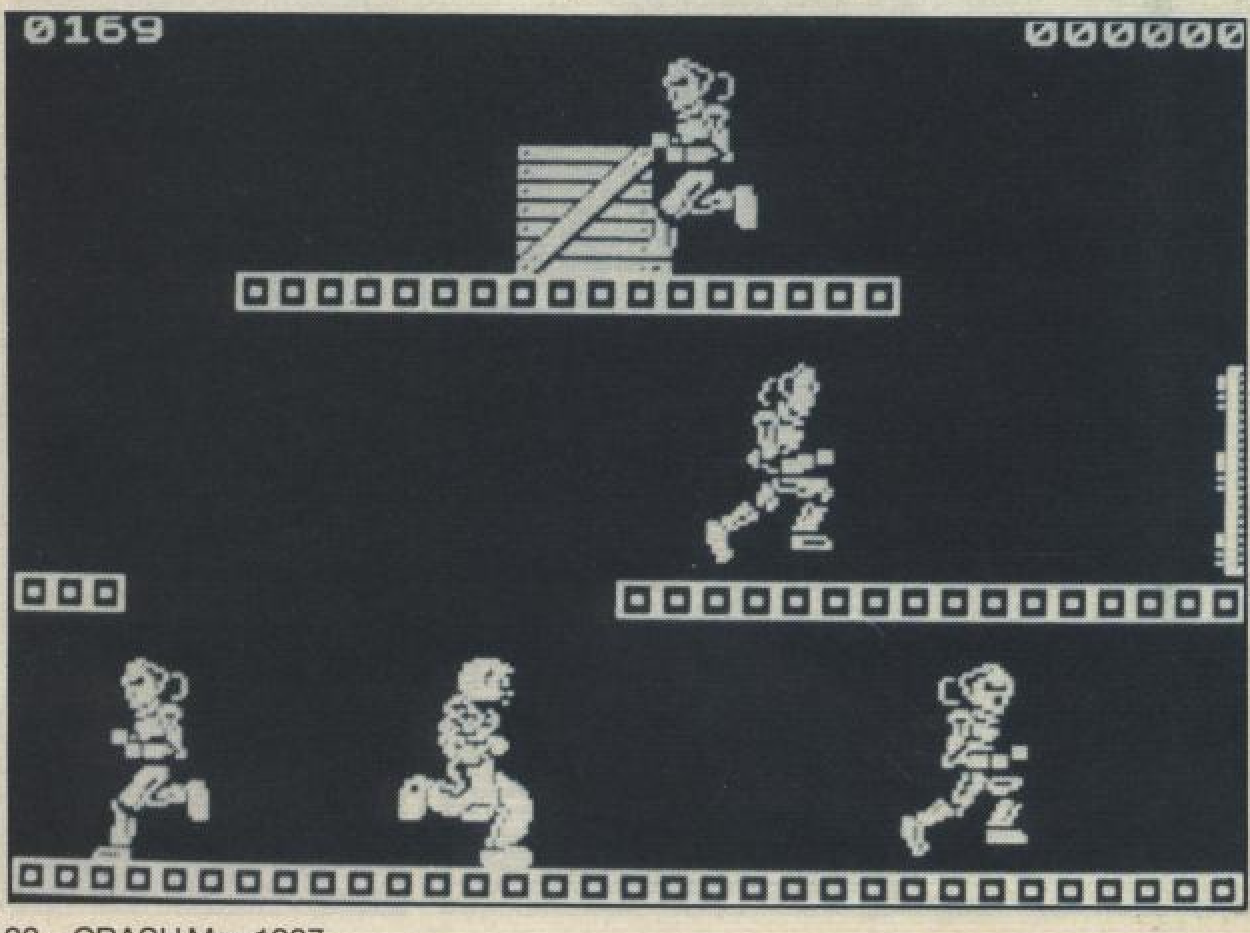
" MELBOURNE HOUSE have come up with something that we've all seen before. There isn't an iota of Knucklebusters *that's completely original. The graphics are very boring and little imagination has been used on the backgrounds. Deke is well animated, but slow to react in the fight sequences. The title music is very tuneful, but sound during the game contains the same old white noise effects.* Knucklebusters *is repetitive and represents low value. "*

MIKE

" As a full price game, *Knucklebusters* hasn't a lot offer. The graphics are nice enough, with some pleasant animation, particularly on the main character, but I had a problem finding much playability in there. The basic storyline is okay (if slightly short), but the game itself seems to lack any amount of new ideas or interesting bits. The tune and effects are good, but a successful game needs more than pretty graphics and funky music to do well, as I'm sure the folks at MELBOURNE know. Not the best game they've ever produced. "

GARETH

" I couldn't believe that Knucklebusters **was a full-price release, you certainly don't get much for your £7.95. The graphics are pretty basic, and the characters (though well defined) tend to repeat themselves, adding no depth to the gameplay. There is some good animation though, especially the smoothness of the central character. The title tune is very original, but listening to it is the only real pleasure to be gained from this program. I don't think that** Knucklebusters **will get very far. "**



COMMENTS

Control keys: definable
Joystick: Kempston, Interface 2, Cursor
Use of colour: unimaginative
Graphics: some good animation on large characters, but generally lacking in variation
Sound: reasonable title tune, little else of note
Skill levels: one
Screens: continuous scrolling
General rating: A platform-cum-beat 'em up which soon becomes tedious.

Presentation	78%
Graphics	65%
Playability	50%
Addictive qualities	49%
Value for money	49%
Overall	52%

CRASHTIONNAIRE
Help Us To Help You!

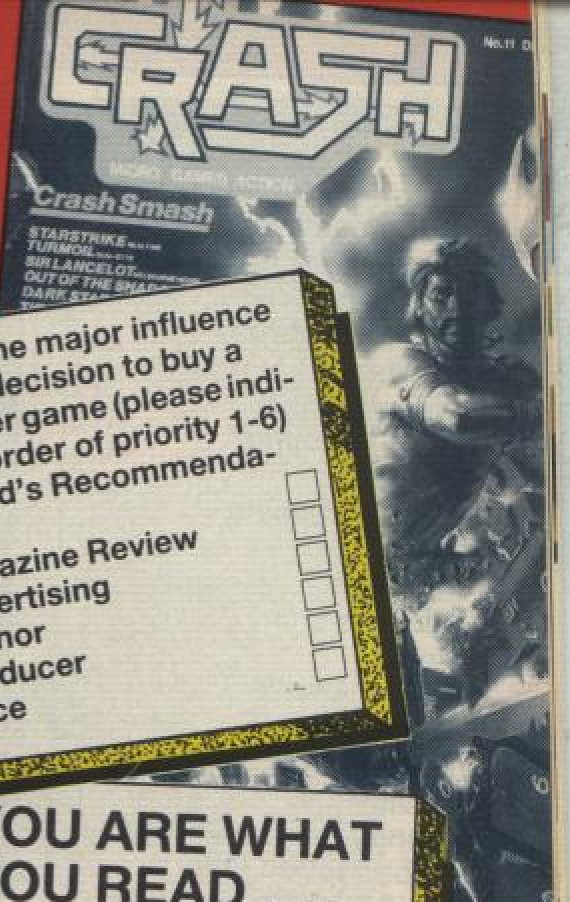
Yes, it's another one of those psuedo-nosey form things. But Questionnaires have their uses – we want to know what you think about CRASH and the additions we have planned, and whether you want us to change anything. Perhaps you like things as they are – it's up to you to tell us.

Please fill out this form to the best of your ability, then send it (or a photocopy if you don't want to cut up your CRASH) to **CRASHTIONNAIRE, CRASH, FREEPOST** (no stamp required) **Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1BR** to arrive here before 28 May 1987

The first form drawn out of Mailbag after this date earns the sender £50 worth of software of his or her choice, plus a CRASH cap, T-Shirt and Sweatshirt. The next four forms drawn earn their senders £10 worth of software, plus a cap and T-Shirt.

Thanking you in advance for your help . . .

Roger Kean



What is the major influence on your decision to buy a computer game (please indicate in order of priority 1-6)

A) Friend's Recommendation ☐
B) Magazine Review ☐
C) Advertising ☐
D) Author ☐
E) Producer ☐
F) Price ☐

Just tick the appropriate box(es) or enter a figure as requested.

FIRST BASE

SEX

Are you . . .
MALE ☐
FEMALE ☐

AGE

How old are you? ☐☐

OCCUPATION

Are you . . .
A) At school ☐
B) At College/University ☐
C) Working Full Time ☐
D) Working Part Time ☐
E) Unemployed ☐

MONEY MATTERS

On average, how much do you spend every week on computer games?
A) £2-£5 ☐
B) £6-£10 ☐
C) £11-20 ☐
D) More Than £20 ☐

Have you purchased a utility in the LAST six months?
YES ☐
NO ☐
If YES, please state type . . .

Do you intend to purchase a utility in the NEXT six months?
YES ☐
NO ☐
If YES, please state type . . .

Have you purchased a peripheral in the LAST six months?
YES ☐
NO ☐
If YES, please state type . . .

Do you intend to purchase a peripheral in the NEXT six months?
YES ☐
NO ☐
If YES, please state type . . .

Do you intend to buy a new computer in the next six months?
YES ☐
NO ☐
If YES, please state make of computer you intend to buy . . .

YOU ARE WHAT YOU READ . . .

When did you first buy CRASH?

How many issues have you bought since then?
ALL ☐
SOME ☐
If some, How many? ☐☐

On average, how many other people read your copy of CRASH? ☐☐

How do you get CRASH?
Subscription ☐
Reserved/delivered by newsagent ☐
Off the shelf ☐

In order of preference, which other computer magazines do you buy or read? (points 1-6)
Computer & Video Games ☐
Computer Gamer ☐
Popular Computing Weekly ☐
Popular Computing World ☐
Sinclair User ☐
Your Sinclair ☐
Other (Please Specify) ☐



IN GENERAL . . .

Please award marks out of ten for each of the following features in CRASH

- Adventure Trail ☐☐
- Advertisements ☐☐
- Charts ☐☐
- Competitions ☐☐
- CRASH Course ☐☐
- Editorial ☐☐
- Fear & Loathing ☐☐
- Forum ☐☐
- Frontline ☐☐
- Lunar Jetman ☐☐
- News ☐☐
- PBM Mailbox ☐☐
- Playing Tips ☐☐
- Previews ☐☐
- Reviews ☐☐
- Money Saving Offers ☐☐
- Subscription Offers ☐☐
- Tech Niche ☐☐
- Tech Tips ☐☐

Any comments about any or all of the above?

SOFTWARE COVERAGE

Please give a percentage rating for CRASH's coverage of software accordingly

- News ☐☐☐ %
- Previews ☐☐☐ %
- Reviews ☐☐☐ %

REVIEWS

Are the reviews detailed enough?
YES ☐
NO ☐

Are the reviews long enough?
YES ☐
NO ☐

Are there enough screen shots?
YES ☐
NO ☐

What do you think of the standard of CRASH's covers?
GREAT ☐
OK ☐
RUBBISH ☐

What do you think of features such as Tamara Knight and Terminal Man?
GREAT ☐
OK ☐
RUBBISH ☐

Would you be interested in seeing a Readers' Game Challenge?
YES ☐
NO ☐

If YES, which format appeals to you most . . .
Reader Vs Reviewer ☐
Reader Vs Reader ☐

Which reviewer do you most often find yourself in agreement with?
Ben Stone ☐
Paul Sumner ☐
Mike Dunn ☐
Richard Eddy ☐

Are the comments detailed enough?
YES ☐
NO ☐

How often do you agree with ratings?
Always ☐
More Often Than Not ☐
Occasionally ☐
Rarely ☐
Never ☐

Would you like to see the ratings system changed or improved?
YES ☐
NO ☐
If YES, how? . . .

Do you use CRASH as a source of reference when buying software?
Always ☐
Sometimes ☐
Never ☐

AND FINALLY . . .

A really nosey bit which will help us work out who you are and what you're about. If you feel strongly about it, don't fill in this part – it's more important we know what you feel about CRASH – but we would appreciate it if you did!

How much money do you spend EACH WEEK on Soft Drinks?
£1 ☐
£2-£5 ☐
£6-£10 ☐
Over £10 ☐

How much money do you spend EACH WEEK on packet foods like 'crisps'?
£1 ☐
£2-£5 ☐
£6-£10 ☐
Over £10 ☐

How much money do you spend EACH WEEK on hamburgers or other 'fast foods'?
£1 ☐
£2-£5 ☐
£6-£10 ☐
Over £10 ☐

Which TV Station do you watch the most
BBC 1 ☐
BBC 2 ☐
ITV ☐
Channel 4 ☐

And how many hours EACH WEEK do you watch TV? ☐☐

Which Radio Station do you listen to most?
BBC Radio 1 ☐
Independent Commercial ☐
Local BBC ☐
Radio Luxemburg ☐

And how many hours EACH WEEK do you listen to radio? ☐☐

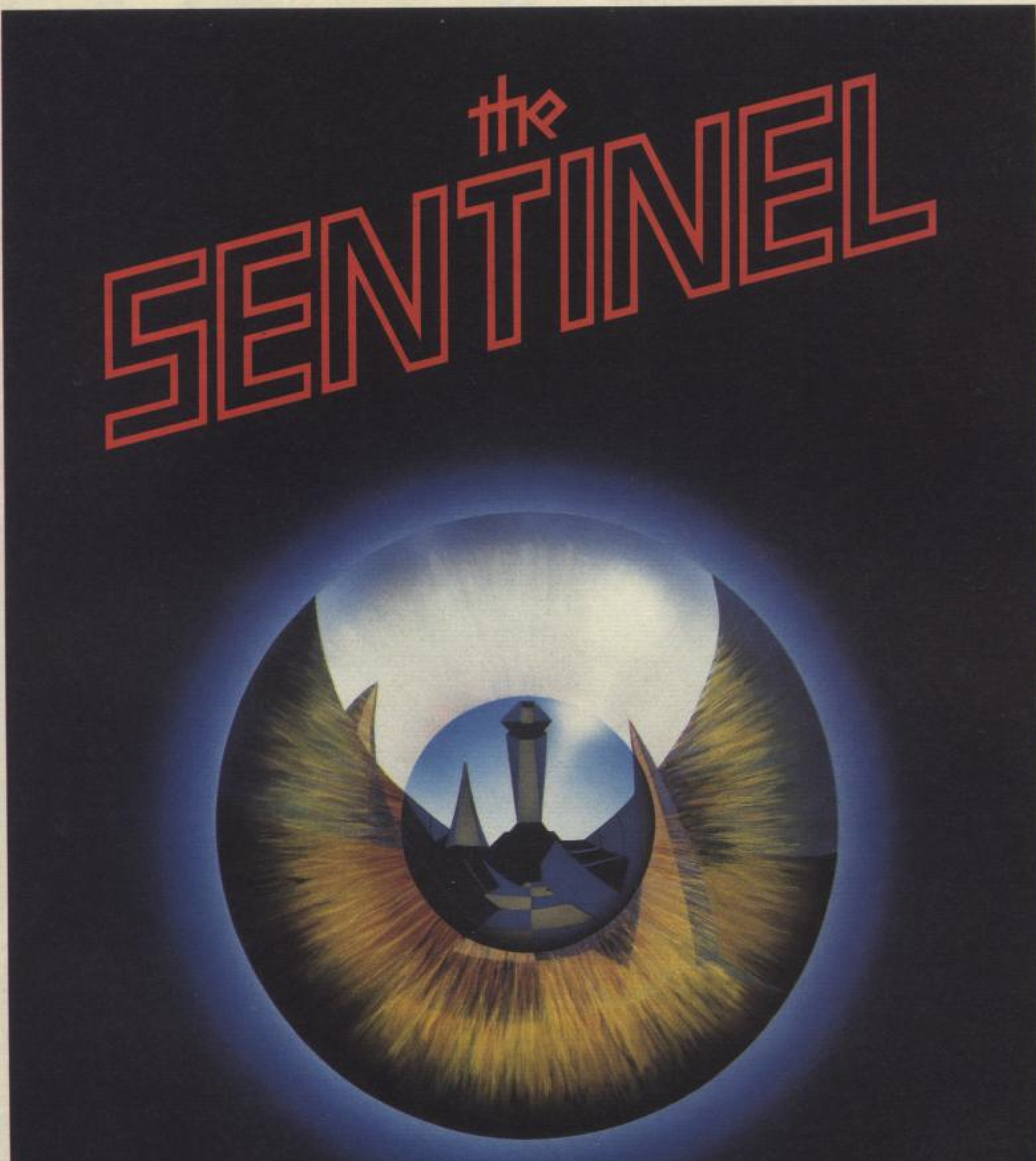
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T-Shirt size ------------------

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WORLD GAMES

Producer: US Gold/Epyx
Retail Price: **£7.95**
Author: **Choice**

Now's your chance to be a sporting superhero by taking part in eight international events, representing one of 18 countries. You decide how many events to participate in, and results are checked against the world record by selecting the appropriate option. The eight events are . . .

1. **Russian Weightlifting** – Competition is in two classes, the 'snatch' and 'clean and jerk.' Three lifts are made in each, followed by a judges assessment. The lifter who raises the greatest weight wins the contest.
2. **German Barrel Jumping** – A pre-selected number of barrels stretches across an ice-rink. Competitors skate towards them, using their timing and skill to clear them with a mighty leap. Whoever clears the most is the winner.

GARETH

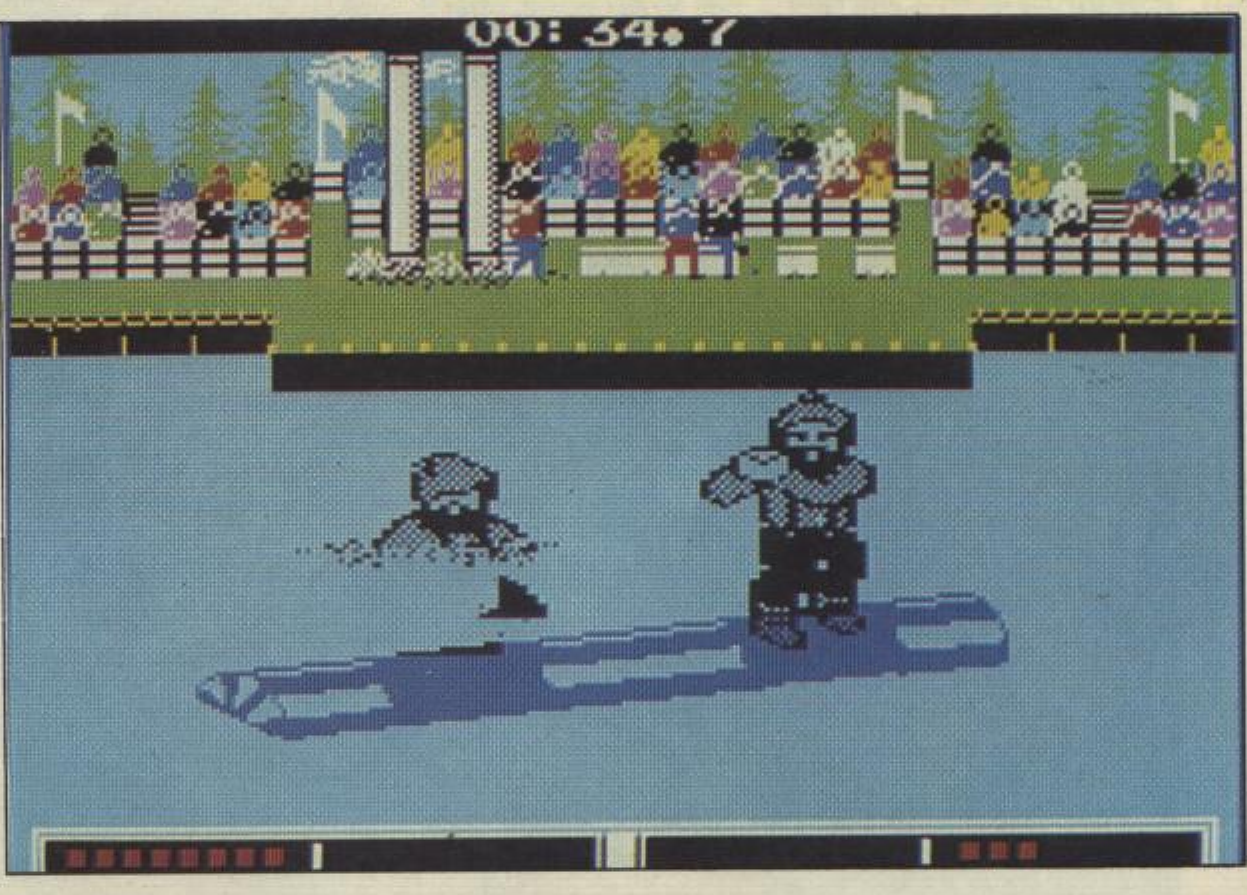
" I'm not as impressed with this as I was with its predecessor – especially because of the ridiculous wait between events. The graphics and animation are quite good, and colour clashes have been kept to a minimum. The backgrounds seem very similar though, they look as if they were thrown together at the last minute. As far as playability goes, it's great fun! Especially if you get some friends in to compete against, which makes the joy of winning even more. "

3. **Mexican Cliff Diving** – Here you choose the height from which to dive from the cliffs of Acapulco. The wind speed affecting each dive is shown by an arrow's length at the top of the screen, and points are scored for style and height.
4. **French Slalom Skiing** – A series of flags run down a snow covered hillside. Good reflexes, agility and precision are used to ski through these in the quickest time possible. A five second penalty is added for hitting a gate, whilst a fall results in disqualification.
5. **Canadian Log Rolling** – Here you have to stay balanced on a floating log which is being rotated in either direction by the feet of a lumberjack. Three attempts are allowed to complete the event, the last lumberjack to stay on the log is the winner.

► **Log rolling is just one of eight events. Here, the unlucky contestant is about to be attacked by a shark.**

MIKE

" I've waited along time for some sort of follow-up to *Winter games*, as we never saw any of the *Summer Games* on the Spectrum – so this is it . . . The graphics are very nice, but I felt it was a little bit annoying having to load the events in one by one, especially as they were able to load half of them at the same time on the predecessor. This is one of the better sports sims available, and I reckon that for the price, the amount of playability and lastability you get are matched just about right. Worth looking at. "



6. **American Bull Riding** – Holding on by a piece of rope, you must stay on the back of a spinning bull for eight seconds. Points are scored for style, with the length of your rope and the unpleasantness of your chosen bull taken into account.
7. **Scottish Caber Tossing** – Here a small tree-trunk is lifted and thrown. The caber must flip over after it has been thrown, and the furthest throw wins.
8. **Japanese Sumo Wrestling** – Taking the part of an obese oriental matman, you attempt to force your opponent out of a tiny ring. The contest's length and the reaction time of combatants determines the score.

The Grand Champion of these World Games is chosen on the basis of five points for each gold medal received, three points for silver and a single point for bronze.

PAUL

" *I'm sorry to say that* World Games *is not as good as* Winter Games. *The graphics don't look as realistic and there's not a tune to be heard anywhere. It seems like an eternity waiting for each game to load, and when it does it isn't really worth the wait. The controls make you feel as if you are using a computer and not actually playing a sport. Perhaps the next one in the series will bring back some realism to the games.* "

► **Looks like ace sumo photographer Cameron has won a lucky fall.**



COMMENTS

Control keys: definable
Joystick: Kempston, Interface 2, Cursor
Use of colour: adequate for the job
Graphics: uneven in quality from event to event
Sound: meagre spot FX
Skill levels: vary between events
Screens: eight events
General rating: A bit disappointing compared to previous games in the series, but nevertheless, a worthwhile package for the money.

Presentation	77%
Graphics	73%
Playability	68%
Addictive qualities	68%
Value for money	66%
Overall	71%

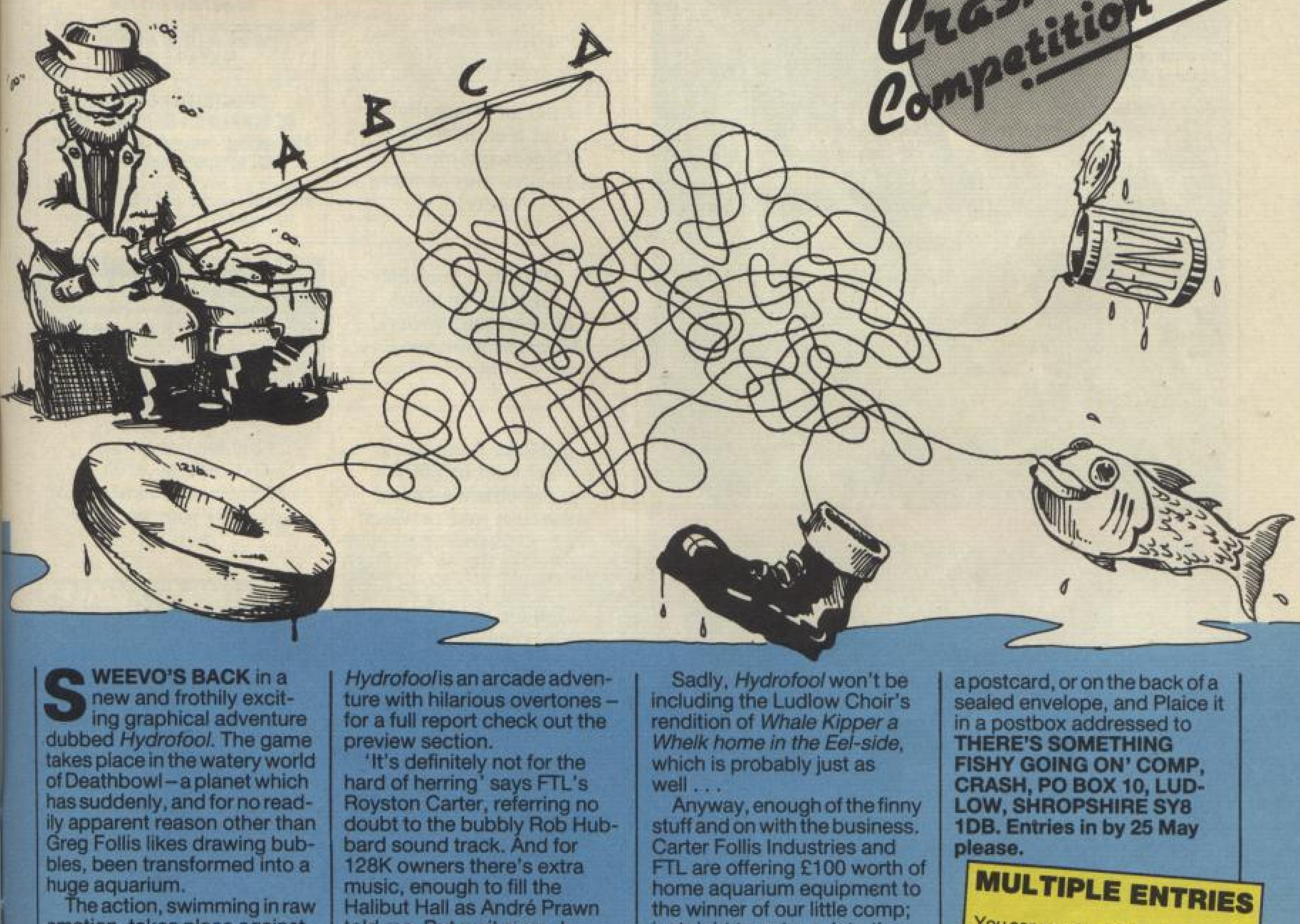
FTL'S THERE'S SOMETHING FISHY GOING ON COMP

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25 copies of Sweevo's new adventure, *HYDROFOOL*, up for grabs too!

Crash Competition



SWEEVO'S BACK in a new and frothily exciting graphical adventure dubbed *Hydrofool*. The game takes place in the watery world of Deathbowl – a planet which has suddenly, and for no readily apparent reason other than Greg Follis likes drawing bubbles, been transformed into a huge aquarium.

The action, swimming in raw emotion, takes place against an almost familiar 3D background, but now features amazing

HYDROMATION

– a technique so revolutionary no-one really understands what it's all about, least of all anyone at FTL. However, those 'in the know' are staying clammed up about it.

Like *Sweevo's World*, *Hydrofool* is an arcade adventure with hilarious overtones – for a full report check out the preview section.

'It's definitely not for the hard of herring' says FTL's Royston Carter, referring no doubt to the bubbly Rob Hubbard sound track. And for 128K owners there's extra music, enough to fill the Halibut Hall as André Prawn told me. But wait a mo, I thought; mere humble comps minion I may be, but even I know you can't hear music under water. 'Ah,' replied Greg Follis sagely, gently waving his Rocker's quiff, 'but air bubbles don't burst under water either.' It was a statement designed to baffle a poor, over-worked competitions person – but then, that's Greg Follis for you.

Sadly, *Hydrofool* won't be including the Ludlow Choir's rendition of *Whale Kipper a Whelk home in the Eel-side*, which is probably just as well . . .

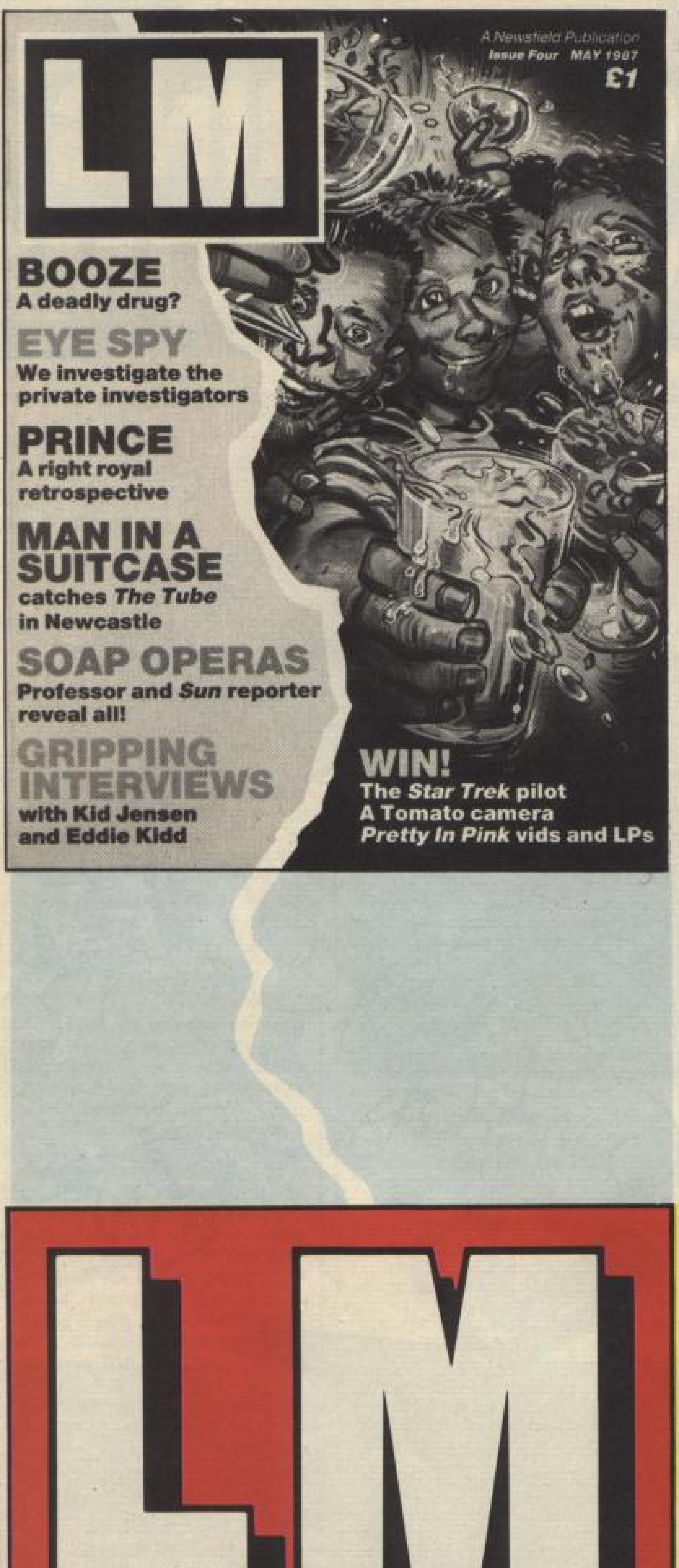
Anyway, enough of the finny stuff and on with the business. Carter Follis Industries and FTL are offering £100 worth of home aquarium equipment to the winner of our little comp; just right to get you into the *Hydrofool* mood. And for 25 runners up there are copies of the game too!

I've dreamed up something which is always a nightmare to me – unravelling balls of twine bunged carelessly into my broom cupboard by heartless reviewers is a daily task. So all you have to do is find which fishing line in this tangled skein leads to the fish, jot it down on a postcard, or on the back of a sealed envelope, and Plaice it in a postbox addressed to **THERE'S SOMETHING FISHY GOING ON' COMP, CRASH, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1DB. Entries in by 25 May please.**

MULTIPLE ENTRIES

You can send in entries to as many competitions (but only one entry per comp, you greedy Spectrum owners!) in a single envelope to save on postage. **BUT PLEASE REMEMBER:** Do not enclose any other editorial mail such as Forum, Adventure Trail, PBM letters etc, as it will delay their being sorted; **AND** never enclose any Subscription or Mail Order forms and payments with multiple competition entries.

Please mark the outer envelope clearly with the legend **MULTIPLE ENTRY**, and then the usual address.



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PREVIEW

MERELY MANGRAM

Coming soon to a Spectrum near you!

After many moons, and having answered the prayers of at least one reader (see **FORUM** !), I've found the time to do a more newsy previews intro. Over the page there's a spread of three games, two from GREMLIN GRAPHICS – one almost ready, *Thing Bounces Back*, and *Mask* well in development – and one from F T L/GARGOYLE GAMES which is called *Hydrofool*, but is really *Sweevo's II*. Meanwhile, back on this page . . .

It's London, the swinging Twenties, and the Charleston is all the rage – except in one small settlement – Arkham. What ever happened to the pleasant country village of Arkham? One minute a quiet place, barely on the map, and now . . . Well, something strange has happened – and nobody knows quite what's going on.

That's where you enter the scene, a reporter for the *London Chronicle* in search of that elusive exclusive and perhaps an answer to the *Mystery of Arkham Manor*, a two-part adventure thriller from MELBOURNE HOUSE.

The first part is set in the village itself, the second in the surrounding countryside. There's plenty of interaction here as communicating with the inhabitants is essential for ferreting out snippets of information. The screen's split into four, the largest section being an action window illustrating the reporter's movements. On its right is an option window displaying the possible actions, and at the bottom sit object and information windows, the latter for conversations with other characters. Will the intrepid CRASH journalists be capable of solving the mystery? More action, adventure, and intrigue next month.

Staying with MELBOURNE HOUSE, it seems that the only way for upstart Hobbit Frodo Baggins to prevent Thorin from sitting down and singing about gold is to sign up another licence deal. So, for the third time, here comes an adventure based on Tolkien's Middle Earth series. Described by MELBOURNE HOUSE (with commendable adjectival restraint) as 'a brilliant piece of fantasy software', *Shadows of Mordor* centres round Sam and Frodo's escapades as told in the second *Lord Of The Rings* book, *The Two Towers*. Inputs are made in standard BEAM SOFTWARE Inglish with an 800-word vocabulary; so now you can say virtually anything you want with sentences of up to 128 characters in length.

Derek will be casting an eye over it next month. In the meantime, get your taste buds jangling for yet another Hobbit game from MELBOURNE – a *Lord Of The Rings* arcade game dealing heavily with the battles. For more information on that, tune in next month when CRASH has a natter with the game's designer, veteran programmer **Mike Singleton** and the programming team.

Talking of veterans, if you enjoyed Don Priestly's *Trapdoor*, then you'll be delighted to hear that he's currently developing his next graphical masterpiece for PIRANHA, called *Flaunting Flunky*.

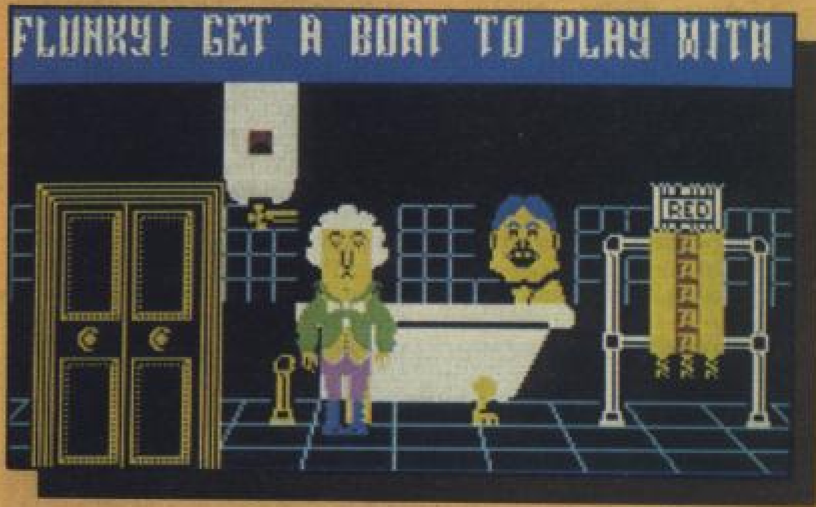
And a right royal game it is too. Designed to appeal to those who can't get enough Royalty from the pages of the *Sun* or *Paris Match*, it aims to give you an insight into the goings on down at old Buck House. Take control of Flunky the servant, and perform endless tasks for the Royal household. Get it right, or end up on the streets being chased by savage Flunky-eating corgis.

As we go to press, all we've seen is a very early running demo, and a lot of Flunky's tasks haven't been firmly decided upon yet. In the meantime I'll leave you with a couple of shots of Andy and Fergie as they prepare for a night out on the town.

► A taster from Middle Earth and the Shadows of Mordor – but where's Thorin?

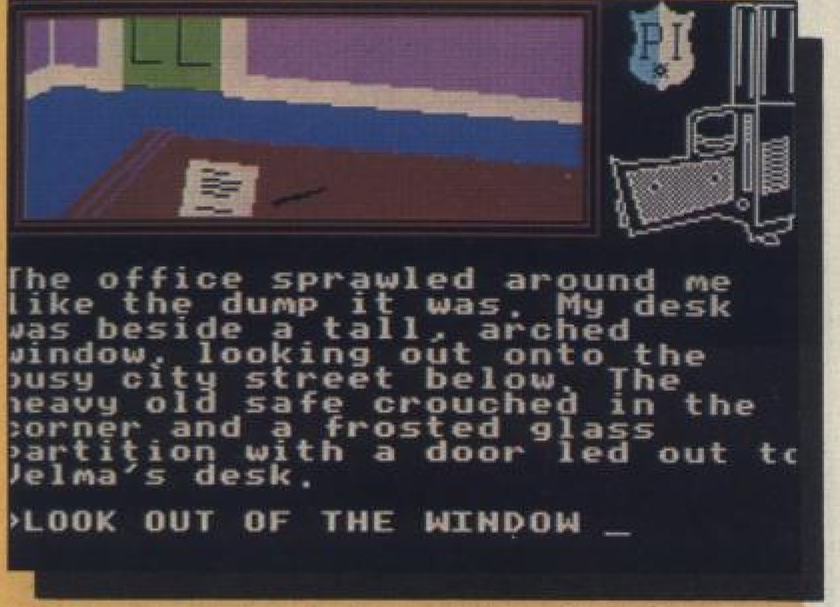


► Bathtime for HRH Prince Andrew allows time to examine the fluff in his naval and play with a boat! (Geddit? Naval – Boat?! . . . Sheesh)



► Poor old Fergie Pitstop: 'Haylp! Haylp! My freckles – they're-a-gone! For the last time HAYLP . . .'





Early one morning, just as the day was dawning . . . it looked like a bomb had decided to hit the office.

Royals always need a detective nearby, to keep them secure, but they probably wouldn't want **PIRANHA**'s Sam Spillade within miles – he just attracts mayhem naturally. Sam stars in their second adventure release, *The Big Sleaze*, currently being programmed by **DELTA 4**, the team headed up by **Fergus McNeil**, creator of *Bored of The Rings* and *The Boggit*.

It's a spoof of the Great American Detective, set in New York of the Thirties. Sam Spillade's a private dick operating from a sleazy NY office, home to a million cigarette butts, half-eaten Danish Pastries and a pile of unpaid bills. His cases provide loads of adventures, travelling around the game's many locations. Solve them if possible, stay alive at all costs.

DELTA 4 have also included the third installment of Fergus' micro magazine, *Sceptical*, in the package. It's a sort of Teletext program written with familiar **DELTA 4** overtones.

From over the sea, Spain to be exact, comes *Alien Evolution*, to be released by **GREMLIN GRAPHICS** (busy bunch at the moment) on their £4.99 label. The action's set in the aftermath of a nuclear holocaust. Earth's surface is uninhabitable – but it suits some nasty aliens just fine! Deep in an underground complex scientists have finally discovered a means to make the planet habitable, but first the aliens must be exterminated.

After months of development they've created a sophisticated android to attack the four alien forms – when all four have been wiped out they regenerate, but this time there's five times as many!

The main scrolling area is pure blue monochrome, featuring fast, multi-direction scrolling and loads of manic blasting action. Olé! Oh, and apologies for the screen shot quality – it's not Cameron's fault, these came from a video.

Just to round off, have a quick look at *Leviathan*, coming soon from **ENGLISH SOFTWARE**. The Leviathan is the most up-to-date space craft you can imagine, with about the same appeal as an XR4i today. Blast your way through three planet zones and up to ten attack waves on each planet. The ship can bank, turn, climb, swoop, roll, reverse, land, refuel and then promptly disappear up its own exhaust pipe.

So can I – back next month with more previews.

RELEASE DATES

Release dates are often difficult to discover, but here's a guide. CRASH is not responsible for any changes which may be made by software houses. **Alien Evolution** – June, £4.99. **Leviathan** – May, £7.95. **Mask** – July, £7.95. **Thing Bounces Back** – May, £7.95. **Hydrofool** – May/June, £7.95. **The Big Sleaze** – May £9.95. Exact dates are uncertain for **Mystery of Arkham Manor** and **Shadows of Mordor**, but they should be reviewed next month. Other games mentioned are still in development.

Tomorrow's XR4i – the swooping Leviathan.





Hurtling through the ventilator shafts at the back of the factory, that's Thing in the top one. The green bullet-shaped object is an entrance/exit.

BOUNCING BACK FOR THE FIRST TIME

THING BOUNCES BACK
Gremlin Graphics

On the Spectrum this Thing's a bit contradictory. Allow CRASH to explain.

A Long time ago a Commodore star simply named Thing was born. Thing had had to save the world from an evil Goblin who had run amok in the Toy Factory. Thanks to all your Commodore-owning friends *Thing on a Spring* was quite a success – but he never appeared in a Spectrum version.

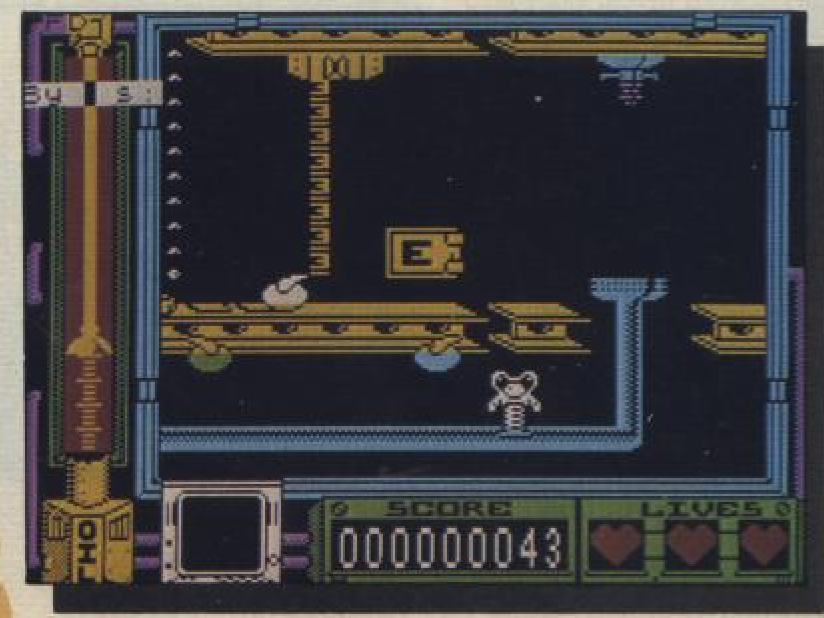
There was bound to be A Sequel – and there is, and this time a Spectrum one as well. So there you have it, a sequel without a prequel – that's computer games for you!

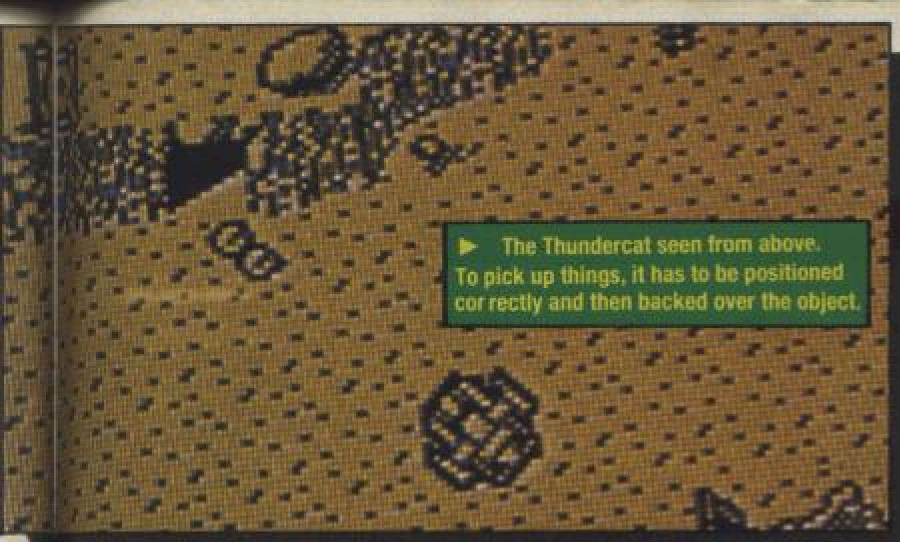
The Toy Factory was eventually saved, you'll be pleased to hear, but unfortunately the central computer was left running and it continued to produce toys, all having an evil life of their own. (Re)-Enter Thing.

Thing, his spring as sprung as before, bounces around a factory consisting of platforms, slides, power fountains and tubes collecting pieces of software, eventually to use them in the destruction of the haywire computer. Of course, the evil toys have different ideas, so it's as well Thing can bounce over them.

Additionally, he can sneak into the factory's ventilation shafts wherein he hurtles round, head over heels, until reaching an exit to another part of the factory. In the shafts his direction may be controlled, but you've got to be quick. And the action is pretty fast, so you've got to keep Thing well oiled too, or his spring siezes up with unfortunate consequences. And if that happens there will never be another Thing to bounce back.

In *Thing Bounces Back* Thing pauses for breath on a blue pipe. The pipes are a source of great humour – and frustration; should he drop into one, he rolls along inside like a cartoon creature until reaching the end, pops out and promptly falls back inside unless you're ready to spring him away. Some of the pipes go for miles!

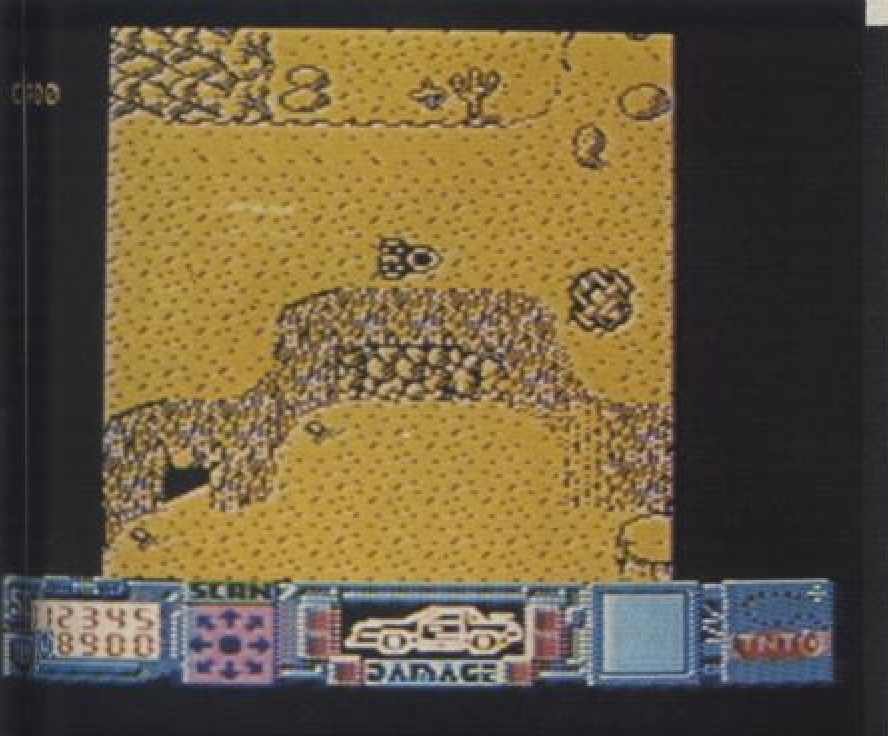




► The Thundercat seen from above. To pick up things, it has to be positioned correctly and then backed over the object.

A VENOMOUS STRIKE

MASK
Gremlin Graphics



Heroic Matt Trackker makes it to the computer screen in July. Based on IPC's *MASK* action comic, the game follows the fortunes of intrepid MASK agent Matt, a lone force against the evil forces of VENOM (Vicious, Evil Network Of Mayhem).

Following a bloody battle, the rest of the MASK team have been captured by Miles Mayhem and his VENOM squad. Matt now has the perilous task of rescuing his fellow agents, who are not only lost in space but also in time. What is to be done? Simple, hop into the trusty Thundercat jeep and trundle around a multi-directional scrolling landscape in search of the other MASKeteers.

But, wait, it's not going to be that easy: VENOM have sent opposing craft out to defeat him. Kill or avoid – two words to be remembered, although kill is probably the best one to keep at the front of your mind!

Two of Matt's colleagues reside on each of the many levels which exist in different time zones. But, without their masks they're powerless – so, recovering those is top of Matt's list. Having retrieved the masks, it's off to locate four parts to a key. A complete key sets up a scanner guiding Matt to his agents. When both MASK agents are found, Matt progresses onto the next level, further on in the future, where the same procedure is repeated – only this time VENOM are meaner, stronger, harder and have even sillier acronymic names. More news from the CRASH (Creative 'Riting And Silly Hactivities) team as we get it.

► **VENOM agents drive tanks, but Miles Mayhem himself gets a sleek machine, seen here (left) attacking the Thundercat.**

SWEEVO'S UNDERWATER FOOLERY

HYDROFOOL
FTL

Gargoyle Games launched their FTL label at last year's PCW Show, and since then both FTL products, *Lightforce* and *Shockway Rider*, have been futuristic games. However, the latest release, *Hydrofool*, returns to one of Gargoyle's best loved heroes – Sweevo: star of *Sweevo's World*.

In his new graphical adventure Sweevo is caught up in the watery world of Deathbowl – a planet totally submerged by the old wet stuff. Now, here comes the interesting part – this is such an early preview that Greg Follis, Sweevo's creator, hasn't quite decided on a game objective! Well, there's two possibilities – either Sweevo can try to remove all the water from Deathbowl, or he can attempt to keep it in.

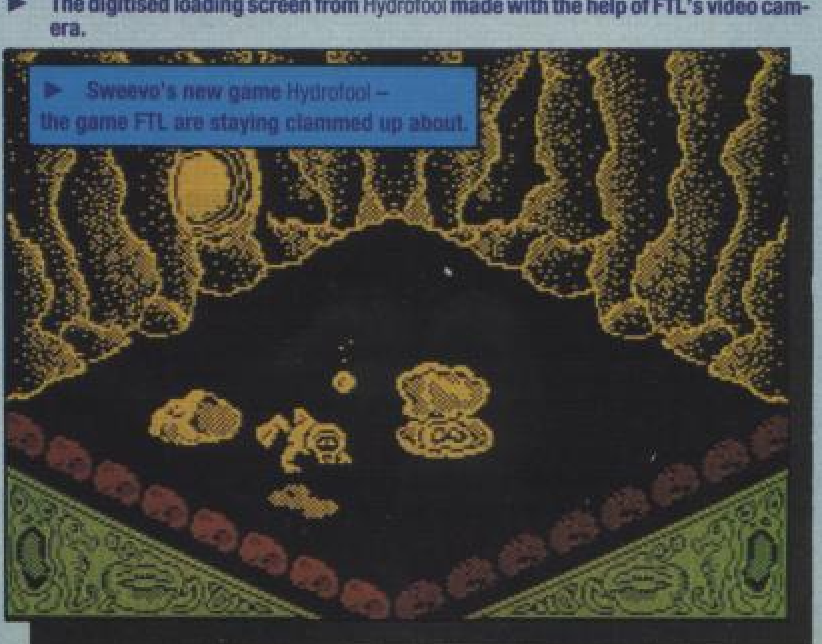
'It all depends whether there's enough memory left,' explains Greg, 'If there is, it would be great to have the water continually draining out. That would mean not all the rooms could be accessed all the time, so tasks would have to be performed in a definite order.' Greg's hoping to have a mammoth 200 inner-space caverns to explore, and maybe an extra 50 on the 128 version.

Hydrofool should feature a great deal more action than *Sweevo's World*, and perhaps a few less puzzles. For instance Sweevo will be equipped with a harpoon, of sorts, so anything he doesn't like the look of can be blasted. And it should last a longer as lives can be picked up along the way – Greg's reckoning on an average playing time of four hours for players experienced in the action.

Look out for our rather fishy competition , and see if you can win yourself a copy of *Hydrofool*.



► **The digitised loading screen from Hydrofool made with the help of FTL's video camera.**



► Sweevo's new game Hydrofool – the game FTL are staying clammed up about.

the crash CHARTS



TOP 30 APRIL

The **HOTLINE AND ADVENTURE CHART** compiled from the votes of CRASH readers is the most realistic chart for gauging the popularity of Spectrum games – it is the games that are being played that get the votes, not the games that are in the shops this week or month.

And the votes are important. It's up to you to let us know what you feel, so fill in the voting forms which live on the RESULTS PAGES and make your voice heard.

If you don't want to carve up your issue of CRASH, we understand. Use a photocopy if you like, or copy the details from the voting forms onto a postcard, or the back of a sealed envelope, and send that to us instead.

Apart from the satisfaction of registering your vote, there's always the chance of winning a prize. Each month we draw ten winners from all the voting forms received – five for the HOTLINE and five for the ADVENTURE chart.

A top prize of £40 worth of software (your choice, not ours) and a CRASH T-shirt is awarded to the first slip drawn from the HOTLINE votes, and another £40 of goodies and a Shirt goes to the Adventure draw winner.

Four runners up from each ballot box collect a CRASH T-shirt and a CRASH Hat. So get those votes in to the **CRASH HOTLINE and CRASH ADVENTURE TRAIL, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1DB.**

No change for the games in the top five slot, all hanging on in there. Eight new entries this month, with QUAZATRON making an amazing reappearance at number 14 after being out of the charts for some time. As far as the Software Houses themselves go, Elite appear to be doing pretty well for themselves, claiming six slots in the chart. A few surprises this month, but, like they say, favourite games never die – they just get included on compilations.

This month's winner of £40 of software for the Hotline Chart is **Andrew Haywood** *from Brighton in Sussex. The four runners up are:* **J Harvey** *from Breaston, Derby;* **Stephen Brassington** *from Sutton-In-Ashfield;* **Shaun Fairbrother** *from Burton-On-Trent and* **Matthew Turner** *from Lexden in Essex.*

Ho-ho, we did have a bit of a giggle with the old Adventure Chart last month as it was our April issue. Did you notice that THE PAWN from Rainbird crept in at number 30? You did! It isn't even finished although most Sinclair users think it is. Anyway, back to this month and after a long time slowly clambering to the top THE BOGGIT has made it. The most significant shuffle this month is Rainbird's Level 9 compilation – JEWELS OF DARKNESS which leaps an amazing 22 places into the number 7 slot.

And the Adventure Trail £40 of software goes to **Michael Bailey** *from Wheaton Aston in Staffordshire. The four runners up are:* **R Davidson** *from Westheat, Birmingham;* **Adrian Liles** *from Harlow, Essex;* **Jonathon Leach** *from Sidmouth, Devon and* **Craig Ruxton** *from Dalrymple, Scotland.*

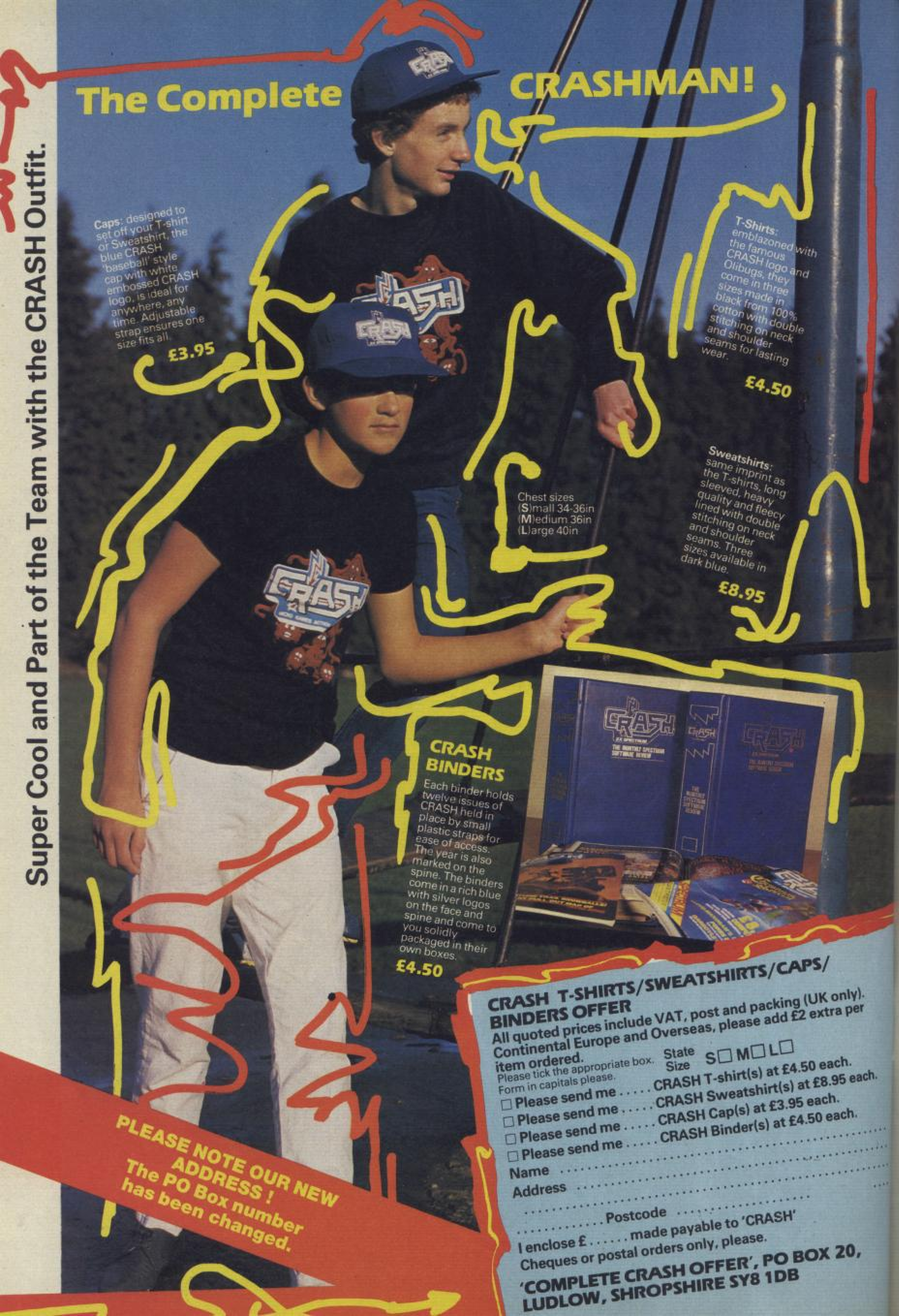


Hotline Top 30

1 (1)	GAUNTLET	US GOLD
2 (2)	COBRA	OCEAN
3 (3)	PAPER BOY	ELITE
4 (4)	URIDIUM	HEWSON
5 (5)	THE GREAT ESCAPE	OCEAN
6 (10)	STARGLIDER	RAINBIRD
7 (6)	BOMBJACK	ELITE
8 (7)	ELITE	FIREBIRD
9 (14)	COMMANDO	ELITE
10 (11)	MATCHDAY	OCEAN
11 (9)	LIGHTFORCE	FTL
12 (28)	FEUD	MASTERTRONIC
13 (13)	GHOSTS AND GOBLINS	ELITE
14 (-)	QUAZATRON	HEWSON
15 (-)	DYNAMITE DAN	MIRRORSOFT
16 (-)	DOOMDARK'S REVENGE	BEYOND
17 (18)	TOP GUN	OCEAN
18 (-)	BOBBY BEARING	THE EDGE
19 (16)	SCOOBY DOO	ELITE
20 (12)	TRAPDOOR	PIRANHA
21 (-)	FIST 2	MELBOURNE HOUSE
22 (10)	LORDS OF MIDNIGHT	BEYOND
23 (17)	SPACE HARRIER	ELITE
24 (-)	SPELLBOUND	MAD
25 (25)	TERRA CRESTA	IMAGINE
26 (-)	ALIENS	BUG BYTE
27 (15)	TRIVIAL PURSUIT	DOMARK
28 (22)	BATMAN	OCEAN
29 (8)	FAIRLIGHT	THE EDGE
30 (-)	SUPER SOCCER	IMAGINE

Adventure Top 30

1 (2)	THE BOGGIT	CRL
2 (1)	HEAVY ON THE MAGICK	GARGOYLE GAMES
3 (3)	SPELLBOUND	MAD
4 (5)	KNIGHT TYME	MAD
5 (4)	BORED OF THE RINGS	CRL
6 (7)	THE HOBBIT	MELBOURNE HOUSE
7 (29)	JEWELS OF DARKNESS	RAINBIRD
8 (6)	LORDS OF MIDNIGHT	BEYOND
9 (10)	LORD OF THE RINGS	MELBOURNE HOUSE
10 (14)	PRICE OF MAGICK	LEVEL 9
11 (13)	SHADOWFIRE	BEYOND
12 (16)	RED MOON	LEVEL 9
13 (9)	GREMLINS	ADVENTURE INTERNATIONAL
14 (12)	FAIRLIGHT 2	THE EDGE
15 (11)	SHERLOCK	MELBOURNE HOUSE
16 (8)	FAIRLIGHT	THE EDGE
17 (15)	MINDSHADOW	ACTIVISION
18 (17)	MIND STONE	THE EDGE
19 (21)	MARSPORT	GARGOYLE
20 (23)	DRACULA	CRL
21 (26)	HAMPSTEAD	MELBOURNE HOUSE
22 (22)	SPIDERMAN	ADVENTURE INTERNATIONAL
23 (20)	SWORDS AND SORCERY	PSS
24 (25)	SEA BASE DELTA	FIREBIRD
25 (28)	VERA CRUZ	INFOGRAMES
26 (24)	KAYLETH	US GOLD
27 (-)	DOOMDARK'S REVENGE	BEYOND
28 (27)	WORM IN PARADISE	LEVEL 9
29 (18)	ENIGMA FORCE	BEYOND
30 (-)	IMAGINATION	MASTERTRONIC



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THE TERMINAL MAN

At long last, and after many requests, THE TERMINAL MAN comic strip is back in a new 12-part adventure starting this month. But first, a six-page resumé of the first 12 episodes to set the scene . . .

Memories of heat . . .
Memories of fire . . . A giant was dying . . .





Stricken by an anomalous hyperspatial jump, parts of the great liner Arcadia crashed spectacularly onto the barren surface of the strange planet. Amid the crackling fires a few survivors stood numbed by shock, yet were still capable of surprise at the sight of a lone man striding unscathed from the hottest part of the conflagration.

His uniform tag said he was Cross, one of the Arcadia's officers. Wielding authority coldly, he ordered the survivors to find a means of getting away from the wreck. A passenger protested; in the event of an accident, they were supposed to remain close to the liner. Cross pointed at the sky . . .



The system into which they had been flung contained thousands of planets arranged in what Cross explained was a Dyson Sphere – a feat of technology far beyond the capabilities of Earth Federation scientists. But the planet's inhabitants were primitive, as the survivors discovered moments later when they were attacked by warriors. Through ingenuity and quick-thinking, Cross drove them off by releasing a super-cooled stream of liquid oxygen from a cylinder. The attackers fled, carrying one prisoner with them.

With the threat removed, Jin Kimas, a girl with some Psi Powers, examined Cross' hands for oxygen frost burns, but she found none. Her suspicions aroused, she demanded to know who Cross was – and to her horror, he showed her . . .





During Arcadia's last dying moments, in the intense heat of the fires on board, a strange silicon virus in the planet's atmosphere invaded the ship's computer and reacted with the partly consumed body of Officer Cross. The new being 'rebuilt' missing parts of its host body using computer graphics, so that the computer could fulfil its primary function – to get the Arcadia's passengers – or what remained of them – safely back to Earth.

Cross began moving the survivors away from the smouldering hulk, across the barren landscape. After many hours they came to a poor mud village where Cross and Jin spoke to an old man and asked him where they might find the starships that traded between the Dyson Sphere's planets. The ancient was whimsical. It was blasphemous to utter the word 'starship' – yet he knew it to be part of their racial memory. The ships were long gone and forgotten – almost . . .

In the wicked city of Kebwob, its despot Vilgarre enjoyed breakfast on his high balcony, entertained by the pains of a 'heretic' who was being tortured for talking of flying through space and visiting other worlds – the captured prisoner from the Arcadia. Vilgarre supported his priests – their religion was another in his arsenal of political weapons for the oppression of his subjects – but he had an interest in the planet-infested sky above which was not so Godly.

He hoped the 'heretic' from the blazing wreck could tell him something of his flying ship's nature, perhaps something of the worlds out there that Vilgarre craved to rule, and more to the point, how a star vessel worked.



But the passenger was no physicist. In his pain he babbled about a man called Cross, the only one who might know how to build a space ship for Vilgarre and help him spread his empire across the sky.

In the village Cross and Jin learned from the old man that guarded religious relics lay in the desert, but from the way he spoke of them Cross suspected they might be the remains of old space ships. Leaving the survivors in the care of the villagers, Cross, Jin and a gambler called Mandrell set off in search of the relics.

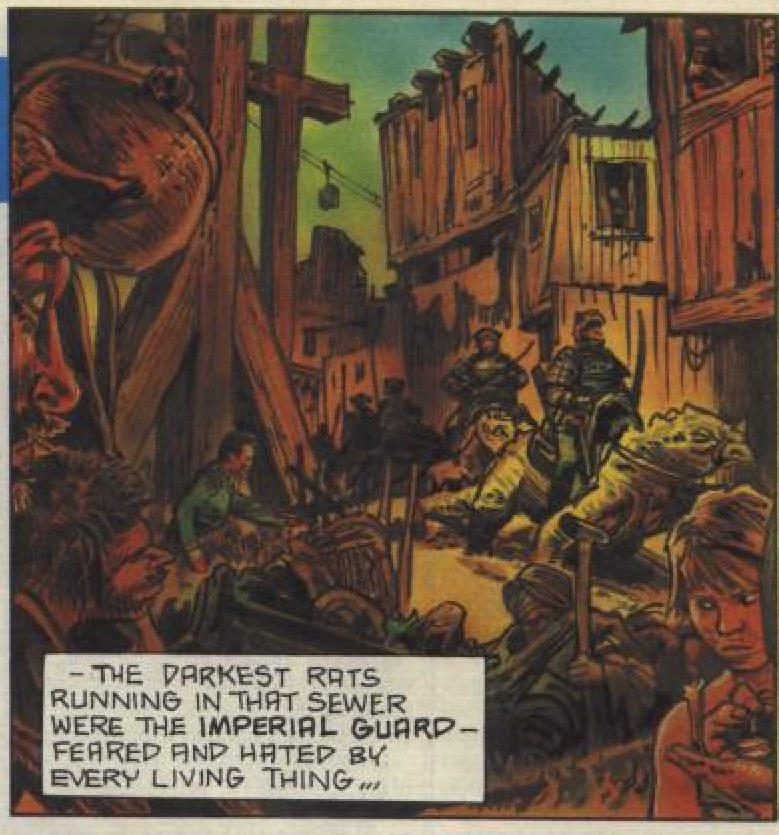
After many days journeying, they came across the ancient hulks, and approached them unchallenged. Leaving Mandrell and Jin to keep watch, Cross located the ship computer's vestigial memory and merged with it. But it was quickly apparent that the vessels had lain there for centuries – they would never fly again.

The three returned to the village to find death all around. One fellow lived long enough to tell them that Vilgarre's men had attacked, slain the villagers and left with the Arcadia's survivors in chains.

With his peculiar abilities, the departing soldiers' infra-red trail across the desert was still clear to











Cross. So he set off with Jin and Mandrell in pursuit.

The trail lead them to Kebwob, but with its high, well-guarded walls Cross' computer mind calculated their chances at getting in as being very low. Mandrell had a plan however – one that played on a very human emotion Cross knew nothing about – greed.

The story was that Mandrell, a man made mad by gambling and possessed of valuable trinkets (such as digital watches), only liked to gamble for belts. The guards that stopped them at a main gate were taken in – what could they lose but their belts? Inside the guardhouse Mandrell lost enough to keep the game going, until Cross had collected all the guards' belts. Then he, Jin and Mandrell made a dive for the street side-door, and escaped as the surprised guards tripped over their collapsing trousers.

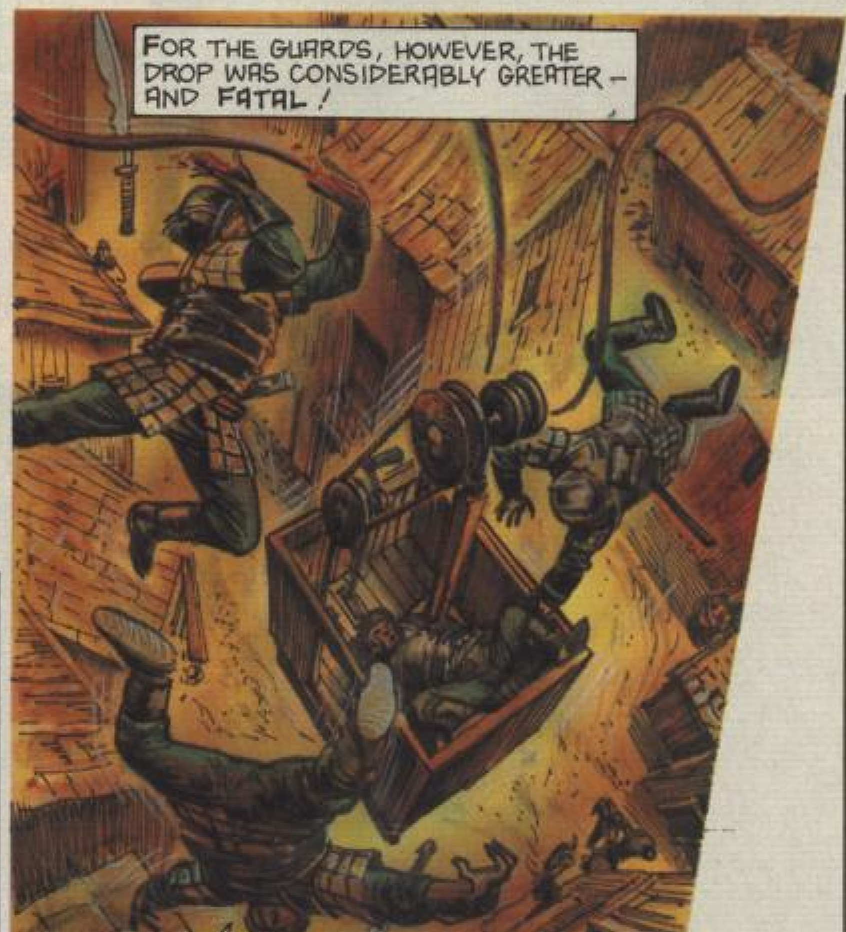
Cross, Mandrell and Jin took shelter in the poorest quarter of Kebwob, a city terrorised by the fearsome Imperial Guards, Vilgarre's bluntest weapon of oppression. But their presence was hard to hide and soon enough Vilgarre's guards found them. They were searching for 'the tall one' who was required to watch the 'heretics' being purified in the great Cathedral.

But Cross had different notions.

Unaware of the outlander's superhuman strength, the Guard Commander's last scrap of awareness, as his own blade sliced through his throat, was to discover just how little he knew. Jin and Mandrell grabbed any weapons they could lay hands on. But there were too many enemies, and the three were forced to flee through the rear of the building, out towards a primitive suspended railway behind the hovel.

Grabbing one of the wooden boxes that passed for cars on the moving railway, they leapt aboard and were taken out of the station across the rooftops. The chasing guards boarded the following car, but suddenly Jin saw another car approaching from the opposite direction, also filled with enemies. They were trapped!

In desperation, Cross reached up to the pulley carrying their car on the overhead rope, and stopped it from



▶

turning. The friction this created he used to amplify the virus in his system and provided power to burn through the rope. It snapped, plunging their car a few feet through the flimsy wooden roof of a house. But the guards plummeted much further, down into the crowded streets below, and were maimed or killed.

Next day Cross, Jin and Mandrell made their way, disguised as locals, toward the great Cathedral for the 'purification' ceremony. Their first sight of Vilgarre was of a darkened figure in the Imperial Box, listening as the High Priest intoned ritual words. Huddled together near the high altar stood the 'heretics' – Arcadia's remaining passengers – awaiting their sacrifice. Cross stepped forward and challenged Vilgarre to stop the ceremony.

Astonished silence met his demand. Then the High Priest protested the sacrilege. But for a moment Vilgarre remained silent – he had what he wanted – the man who could make or find him a Starship.

'Take him!' he ordered the guards. The nearest man attacked, sabre drawn. But Cross merely caught the weapon by its blade, and forced the amazed, then terrified guard down to the ground. Cross's hand showed no sign of lacerations from the razor sharp sword, and his ferocity quelled any further enthusiasm to approach him.



Again he turned to the despot and demanded that Vilgarre give him back his people. Vilgarre sensed a deal would have to be struck – a starship in return for the 'heretics'. The bargain would be easy enough to break later.

In his castle, Vilgarre, having heard of their discovery of the old hulks in the desert, told Cross of more relics which he might visit. He told them that they were to be found in the Burning Lands, a place from which few men had emerged alive. And he gave Cross 30 days to return, with a space ship – otherwise the Arcadia's passengers would all die.

With no other options open, Cross, Jin and Mandrell set off on mounts supplied by Vilgarre for the Burning Lands. When they had departed, Vilgarre descended to the depths of his castle to awaken Karrian, an immortal, old beyond measure, wrecked, enslimed in evil and bound to Vilgarre by arcane ties. Vilgarre ordered Karrian to follow Cross, watch him, and be ready to kill all three when the right moment arrived and a working space ship had been discovered.

Deep in the post-nuclear Burning Lands, Mandrell was startled when Cross told him they were looking for usable fuel cells, not a space ship. Vilgarre already had the starship within his grasp, Cross explained, only the despot didn't realise it. Cross would say no more and Jin's pre-occupations were with the evil she sensed following them.

They came to a terrifying gorge 20 klicks deep. The trio were pondering a means of getting across when, suddenly, natives held aloft on hang gliders attacked them.

With his computer-fine instincts for gauging distance and speed, Cross leapt down onto the nearest assailant, knocked him from his perch and then glided round frightening off the remaining attackers. Lower down the chasm Cross landed and discovered the natives' village clinging to vertical rocks. It was unnaturally quiet though, something had slain all its inhabitants. Joining him, Jin sensed that the evil thing following them had done the killing. Cross discovered a sailwing, big enough to carry the three of them, and mounting it, they headed for the opposite side of the gorge.

Once safely down, the explorers continued on foot, taking occasional rests. It was during one such stop that they were startled by an ancient cowled figure approaching, offering to guide them. Jin urged Cross to ignore it, knowing that this was the evil presence she sensed had been following









them. But Cross was prepared to accept the thing's guidance on his own terms and was saying so when the creature was rocked by four crossbow bolts thudding home in its chest. The killer was Jin . . .

Her actions made Mandrell angry, their only hope of a guide was dead, but Jin was unrepentant; the creature, she said, was a monster with only death in its mind – theirs.

During the next day the three seekers arrived at the edge of a vast, flat featureless plain. Cross stepped down onto it – and immediately began moving away from the edge and the others. But he was delighted, recognising that this was a sophisticated transport system. Jin and Mandrell joined him, and together they all moved away from 'land' towards the distant centre where a gravity 'whirlpool' carried them vertically down into the vast lit underground hall of an ancient space port.

Down some less well lit passages, they came across a hangar bay packed with the essential fuel cells Cross had been hoping to find. And they also discovered a flier, old but waiting to be used. With the fuel loaded, Cross powered up the vehicle and flew fast, back towards the gravity vortex in an attempt to escape the port.

At full speed, to overcome its downward force, the vehicle hurtled at it, through the sharp bend and up. But something was coming down, something hideous and – splat. The re-animated body of Karrian was smeared over the flier's windshield. To their horror the ruined figure started speaking, telling them that nothing could kill Karrian, it was he who brought his friend death to others . . .

The flier hurtled up out of the gravity vortex with Karrian incredibly still clinging to its windshield. But before the monster could start clawing his way in at them, Cross handed control over to Mandrell, and clambered outside to engage Karrian in a scrabbling fight.

By this time the flier's speed had carried them back over the city of Kebwob. Cross and Karrian battled, precariously poised on the roof of the craft, high above the spider web of streets. Cross caught his opponent off balance, but clinging to Cross, Karrian pulled him over the edge so that they both tumbled towards the ground.

Mandrell put the flier into a steep dive and screamed down after Cross, matching speed with his falling mass, so that Jin could reach out and pull him in. They just managed in time before Mandrell had to pull out of the dive to avoid the ground.

Back aboard, Cross ordered Mandrell straight to the towering Cathedral, and in through its massive doors. The flier stopped at the high altar and, getting out, Cross told Jin to load fuel cells into the 'sacrifice' chamber, where he was sure they would fit perfectly into slots provided. Meanwhile he lifted a stone slab off the altar top to revel a complex of controls beneath. The Cathedral itself was Vilgarre's starship!

As Jin completed her task, Vilgarre arrived with guards and the Arcadia's survivors. The despot was furious. He wanted a space ship and Cross had brought him a flying cart. Smiling grimly, Cross pressed a control which caused devices all over the Cathedral to glow and crackle with power. Vilgarre's guards started fleeing in terror before their Gods' wrath.

Amidst the growing panic, a terrifying voice cried out to Cross. It was Karrian and he had unfinished business . . .

Vilgarre had his starship, his dream of empires in the sky was nearly













realised – only Cross stood in his way. He shouted at Karrian, telling him to take Cross and his companions, and having killed them, he would grant Karrian the oblivion the creature craved.

As they struggled Cross told Karrian that Vilgarre lied, that only he, Cross, could really provide Karrian with painless oblivion.

Karrian sensed the truth in Cross, and turned on his master. Grabbing Jin viciously round the throat, Vilgarre pulled the girl before him as a shield.

But Karrian lashed out, knocked her aside unconscious, and grasped Vilgarre in a death hold. The despot had tricked him all along, used him in their obscene bargain as a bringer of death to Vilgarre's opponents. Now he killed Vilgarre, thrusting a sabre blade clean through the ruler of Kebwob.

Cross kept his bargain, and sent Karrian into the ship's anti-matter drive field, where the creature's atoms were painlessly scattered across a million universes, making it impossible for them to reform and bring back the immortal being.

Turning to Mandrell, Cross told the gambler that he must now leave them.



Earlier, Cross had discovered the ship's firing control was situated outside the 'Cathedral'. He preset the hyperspatial co-ordinates for Earth while Mandrell tried persuading him to remain with them. But Cross was still more machine than man, and he felt the need to be a machine again . . .

With the Arcadia's remaining passengers inside, Cross went to the nearby building where lay the ignition control, remotely sealed ship's doors and set it for take off. Within the vessel Jin recovered consciousness and realised that she had lost Cross forever.

As the great star ship strained to reach the sky, the silly clutter of bits and pieces that had been built on to her over aeons fell away. The mighty vessel powered off up into the sky like a thunderstorm, consuming wicked Kebwob in the fire of its leaving.

From the flames Cross strode away into the landscape, searching his component parts, a man's soul, virus and computer brain, his mission as Officer Cross completed. High on a spike of rock, far from anywhere, the Terminal Man finished . . .





To be Continued...

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Crash Competition

Long, long ago (We're talking the sort of time when *Ah Diddums* was in its hey-day and long before this particular Comps Minion was even a twinkle in Mummy Minion's broom) a rather strange computing magazine appeared on the news shelves one wet January morning. Even stranger was the name – **CRASH**. A magazine dedicated to assessing the latest games, it made other magazines laugh. *'Ha ha!'* cried they, *'a mag that spends most of its time talking about games – give it a few issues and it'll die'.*

Anyway, enough of the pretentious 'little would they realise . . . ' historical style, 40 issues under our proverbial belts and CRASH is currently the biggest selling computer magazine in Britain. But what ever happened to the fabled **Issue One**? It sold out at the time, and such back numbers as Aggie had in stock, disappeared a few months later. There isn't even a copy floating about the office, and hardly anyone at Newsfield Towers has an idea what Issue One looked like – Until now.

Through the kindness of a CRASH reader (who wishes to remain anonymous), we've obtained one of the last surviving copies of Issue One. The reader sent us his entire collection from No. 1 to No. 39 to be used as a prize. Of course, some of the earlier issues are a tiny bit 'used', but on the whole it's in excellent condition.

Not only that, but we've tucked them away in three brand new CRASH Binders – and someone is going to win the lot! Whoever it is will be winning over £50 worth of CRASH memorabilia for the price of a stamp!

Simply hunt out all the names in the wordsquare of the people who have worked on CRASH over the last three years, and pop your solution in the post to **ONE WANTS ONE COMP, CRASH, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1DB** to arrive here by 28 May latest. First out of the bag wins. You can send in a photocopy if you don't want to cut up your magazine.

A	X	E	N	O	T	S	Z	G	E	P	H	J	K
S	T	D	R	A	B	B	U	H	H	F	I	H	L
M	E	D	Y	N	A	S	M	I	T	H	B	G	L
R	Q	Y	V	X	D	I	L	M	E	R	A	F	G
G	P	U	B	W	C	L	L	T	E	K	T	U	I
G	O	O	D	W	I	N	M	W	C	Y	E	R	F
R	B	O	P	P	S	M	A	D	A	D	S	B	E
E	R	Q	S	U	O	T	M	A	N	G	R	A	M
T	E	O	R	U	E	K	I	D	D	Y	G	T	W
S	N	O	D	D	A	P	R	V	Y	S	H	E	U
W	N	T	S	K	N	W	V	U	Y	I	Z	S	X
E	A	L	O	R	D	R	I	X	S	A	Z	C	Y
R	N	N	M	N	Y	I	N	R	I	N	G	K	A
B	V	G	I	D	E	Q	G	D	N	A	E	K	N

Name ....

Adress ....

....

....

Postcode ....

The all star line-up

KEAN
FREY
CANDY
HUBBARD
MANGRAM
STONE
KIDD
PADDON
SMITH
EDDY
BRENNAN
PHILLIPSON
IRVING
BREWSTER
GOODWIN
BATES
ADAMS

THE TERMINAL MAN





SHUT UP, SIS! I'M RIGHT HERE!
YOUR MOUTH IS BIGGER THAN YOUR EYES - LOOK!!
WHAT IS IT, PAS?- THE SKYWORLDERS?
SHUSH! ONLY THE OLDIES BELIEVE THAT...
THERE'S NOTHING TO FEAR...
THIS FOREST ONLY HARBOURS PHWEETS -AND THEY'RE-
IK-IK-IK!
HARMLESS!
C'MON - LET'S GET BACK TO THE SETTLING, PAS!
STOP BEING SCARED, SIS- HEY PHWEETY COME HERE!
HE'S VERY NERVY, MUST BE THE STORM...
PAS! C'MON- THE SEARING IS ABOUT TO START AND-
THAT'S JUST A LOAD OF SUPERSTITIOUS NONSENSE-
AAAH!
PAS-PAS! LOOK!!
SCREEUNGAH!!
IT'S-IT'S - RUN, SIS, RUN - C'MON, STOP GOGGLING!
AAAH!
PAS! NOT THAT WAY - THE GLOW - THE SKYW-
AUNGH!
PASSENGERS - COME TO ME - IT-IS-MY DUTY...
NO-NO!!
!



– I – I WILL SEE YOU SAFE – HYPERJUMP – LOST – SAFE ...
IT'S HORRIBLE!
PAS – IT'S A SKYWORLDER!
DON'T WORRY, SIS – I CAN F-FIGHT ANYTHING – I'LL SAVE ...
LOOK! THE THWEET!
PAS! HIS FACE, BODY – THEY'RE CHANGING!!
CROSS!
KEEP CALM! IT IS MY FUNCTION TO SEE YOU SAFELY BACK TO EARTH – RELY ON ME – I AM CROSS – ENGINEER ON THE SHIP ARCADIA AND – AND I AM CROSS – I AM COMPUTER XJZ 1001 – MY FUNCTION TO –
THWEEE-UCK-UCK
WHAT'S HE TALKING ABOUT?
MAGIC – PERHAPS A TRANCE – BUT HE SEEMS HARMLESS ...
THE THWEET FEELS SAFE ...
LOOK! HE'S MELTING AGAIN! UGH!
– AMIDST THE RAIN AND THUNDER, CROSS FLICKERED ON AND OFF ...
– THE COMPUTER IMAGES REPLACING THE MAIMED LIMBS OF HIS BODY UNCO-ORDINATED ...
– IT WAS A HYPNOTIC VISION – BUT OTHER DANGER MADE IT'S APPROACH ...
PAS!!
MULTIPLE CRASHINGS AND A STEADY PACE OF HEAVY FEET –
AIEEEH!



BY OLIVER FREY To be Continued...


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ocean
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